ABIGAIL ADAMS

Abigail Adams as a young woman

FROM THE ORIGINAL BY C. SCHESSELE

ABIGAIL ADAMS

THE SECOND FIRST LADY

BY

DOROTHIE BOBBÉ

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BY

DOROTHIE BOBBÉ

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER
BERNARD DE BEAR

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	FELICITY	3
II	STORM-CLOUDS	11
III	BLOODSHED	20
IV	JUSTICE	27
V	DEFIANCE	33
VI	AUTHORITY	39
VII	RESOLUTION	43
VIII	ADVENTURE	46
IX	PREPARATION	49
X	PROCRASTINATION	57
XI	CONFLAGRATION	62
XII	PARTINGS	68
XIII	ALARM	71
XIV	WAR!	76
XV	LEADERSHIP	85
XVI	A SLIP OF THE PEN	93
XVII	EPIDEMIC	95
XVIII	GRIEF	102
XIX	WAITING	104
XX	DELIVERANCE	111

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXI	REJOICING	117
XXII	STATESMANSHIP	119
XXIII	INDEPENDENCE	124
XXIV	JUBILATION	129
XXV	DISAPPOINTMENT	132
XXVI	MAN-POWER	138
XXVII	VICTORY	142
XXVIII	ABROAD	147
XXIX	DEPRIVATION	155
XXX	RETREAT	160
XXXI	GLORY	165
XXXII	WELCOME AND FAREWELL	166
XXXIII	SEA BATTLE	170
XXXIV	LONELINESS	175
XXXV	MISUNDERSTANDING	179
XXXVI	SEPARATION	187
XXXVII	PEACE	193
XXXVIII	ANTICIPATIONS	200
XXXIX	TRIBULATIONS	209
XL	JOY	219
XLI	ECSTASY	228
XLII	PRESENTATION	241
XLIII	ROMANCE	249
XLIV	DALLIANCE	253

CHAPTER		PAGE
XLV	HOMEWARD BOUND	258
XLVI	WHIRLIGIG	264
XLVII	OFFICE	265
XLVIII	HERITAGE	271
XLIX	FORECAST	275
L	INAUGURATION	282
LI	FIRST LADY	287
LII	NEUTRALITY	292
LIII	INTEGRITY	298
LIV	DEFEAT	302
LV	RELINQUISHMENT	304
LVI	HONOR	310
LVII	SHADOW AND SUNLIGHT	315
LVIII	RECONCILIATION	318
LIX	ANGUISH—AND PEACE	322
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	329
	INDEX	331

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
ABIGAIL ADAMS AS A YOUNG WOMAN	*Frontispiece*
LETTER TO THE HON. OLIVER WENDELL	3
BIRTHPLACES OF JOHN AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS . .	18
JOHN ADAMS	52
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS	140
ABIGAIL ADAMS IN LATER LIFE	210
THE FIRST WHITE HOUSE	306

ABIGAIL ADAMS

I return you thanks Sir for the trouble you took in exchangeing my Money, our currency is some thing like the Stocks abroad, uses and falls with the Crews of the day. I have the Honor to be Sir with Sincere esteem your obliged Humble Servant

A Adams

Hon^bll Oliver Wendell

Jan^ry 20 · 1780

ABIGAIL ADAMS

CHAPTER I

FELICITY

"YOU bid me tell *one* of my sparks (I think that was the word) to bring me to see you. Why! I believe you think they are as plenty as herrings, when alas! There is as great a scarcity of them as there is of justice, honesty, prudence and many other virtues. I've no pretensions to one. Wealth, wealth is the only thing that is looked after now. . . .

But, to be sober, I should really rejoice to come and see you, but if I wait till I get a (what did you call 'em?) I fear you'll be blind with age. . . ."

Thus Abigail Smith, of Weymouth, Mass.,—lightheartedly flaunting her spinsterhood, at seventeen!

But by the time Abigail was eighteen, she had a "spark"—a spark, moreover, hardy enough to have grown into a flame. And hardihood was needed, in the particular rarefied atmosphere that surrounded Abigail.

For Quincys and Nortons, Tyngs and Smiths were looking down their patrician noses. What! Young John Adams, son of a farmer-shoemaker in Braintree, to aspire to one of the shining lights of the Quincy circle?

True, the young man was himself a lawyer. But—a lawyer, forsooth! Abigail must do better than that!

Abigail, however, had a mind of her own, and in the matter of the young man from Braintree, that mind was made up. Years before, when the Smith children were all quite small, their father had assured them that it was wisest for small Puritans, and for

grown ones likewise, never to speak that which was unpleasant. Habit, therefore, precluded Abigail from telling her relatives exactly what she thought of their freely-expressed views on her marriage. But, defiant of further inhibitions, exactly what she meant to *do* in the matter she could and would and did say. After all, it was none other than her father himself—good Parson Smith, of the long, whimsical face and the long, whimsical sermons—who, by his lessons and his precepts and his example of life, had inculcated into Abby that very intelligence, clear-sightedness and singleness of purpose that had made her recognize the one man when she saw him, and cleave to none other.

They harried the poor Parson—Elizabeth, his wife—she who had been Elizabeth Quincy—and her father, old Colonel John, and even that fun-loving mortal, Grandmother Quincy. They cornered him determinedly and abjured him: Would he do nothing? Would he stand by and say nothing? Would he actually tie the knot that would bind their lovely, brilliant Abby to this farmer's son—this—this—lawyer! They conjured him to set his face against this marriage, to find a husband for Abigail who should be more in keeping with her station.

But between the Parson and John there happened to be more than a little sympathy. Both took pride in certain high ideals. Each had views on life and love, friendship and country, that offered grateful hearing for the other.

And besides—Abigail Smith was particularly dear to her father. She had been frail, as a baby. Babies who came through the Massachusetts winters at all were rather to be marveled at; those who actually throve should have struck awe in the breasts of the pious Puritans.

Abby was born on a November day—the eleventh, old style—in 1744, to be carried, not many days later, through chilly streets to a colder meeting house, and there baptized inexorably in icy water. And whenever a thing ailed her, that first winter, or in the years immediately following, she took her share of the snail-

water, and emulsions of earthworms and worse, that were such certain cures for rickets and croup and all the other ills of babyhood.

But—or, perhaps it might be more accurate to say, therefore—after babyhood was past, Abby was still always sick. Sister Elizabeth and Sister Mary trotted to the schoolhouse without her, and learned their smattering of writing and of arithmetic, and their singing and their dancing. Sufficient, this—for girls. Brother Tom might imbibe sterner stuff with his more serious tutors, but feminine learning—ridiculous!

Abby had stayed at home, and the Parson had taught her how to read and how to write, and the Parson's lady, her mother, had given her expert instruction in the domestic arts, so that she became adept, too, at spinning and weaving, at soap-making and bread-making, at churning butter and milking cows, at cooking and mending and sewing fancy and plain work. When she wasn't at the spinning-wheel or in the dairy, Abby might certainly be found in the study, reading every book she could lay her young hands on.

Or she would be visiting at the big, pillared mansion at Mount Wollaston, in Braintree, with Grandmother Quincy, and Grandfather, the stately Colonel John, an important figure in local affairs.

But it was Grandmother who was to loom larger in Abigail's life. Herself a lover of laughter and of piety, of common sense and of virtue, Mrs. Quincy found in this, the second of her three granddaughters, a quick and faithful disciple. Very soon, Abby's visits, from being occasional calls, had grown more and more frequent, so that her grandmother's fireside became in time her school, and the Colonel's large collection of books her library, with the Bible, of course, as the bedrock of her Puritan existence—the source, not only of piety, but of quotation and of inspiration also.

History—the history of England and the young history of these British colonies—was a favorite subject. Her loyalty to the King and her pride in her own pioneer lineage were unbounded. The

works of William Shakespeare she delved deep into, and those of Pope also. The "Spectator" was both her mentor and her model.

Grandmother Quincy's teachings were not forgotten by Abigail to her own dying day. Here it was that she learned to mix laughter with her learning, as at her father's knee she learned to temper criticism with tact.

Many pleasant young boys and girls of the district gathered in that old Quincy mansion as often as weather conditions or distance would allow. With them the youthful Abigail would talk of all she read, and pick apt verses from Shakespeare, and quote from her "Spectator," and discuss history and the gentle arts. And when, for one reason or another, the young people could not foregather, they would write to each other, dipping their pens into the wisdom of the Greek philosophers; and sign their letters with appropriate noms-de-plume. Abigail's was "Diana"—until she met John Adams. And then, because young Adams was a lawyer, she began to change "Diana" for "Portia," and to sign her letters to him thus.

Her first love-letters! It was true that she had not enjoyed a wealth of suitors—though at eighteen that might not be a matter to weigh heavily on her mind. Moreover, those Quincys and Tyngs might well have seemed a formidable barrier to many a more humble suitor.

But not to young John Adams, even though—as those gentle folks of Abby's could not forget—he was not only a farmer, comparatively impecunious; the son of a lengthy line of farmers; but, greater iniquity, a follower of the profession of the law! For the practice of the law was not above suspicion, whatever the practitioner might chance to be. There were many indeed who looked upon it as a subverting of the edicts of the lawmakers—something not quite honest in itself, somehow—something, at any rate, that helped dishonest men. And why, indeed, should dishonest men be helped?

Abigail's suitor came, then, under a shadow,—but Abigail did her best to help him to disperse it.

What if the soil did cling to him? He had, as the eldest son, received a college education at Harvard—a not unusual procedure in the families of the farmers. More, he had distinguished himself there, as boldly as one of his social standing could, while Elihu and Peter Boylston, his brothers, took such schooling as their father could wring for them from the soil.

John had done well enough at college to please his exacting, if humble, father. But even the farmer Adams had been disappointed, not to say shocked, at his son's choice of a profession on emerging. He had sent him to Harvard with the primary intention of making a minister of the Church out of him. Such a calling, as both John Adamses, father and son, well knew, would have raised him in prestige to the level of the highest; for the clergy were the social as well as the spiritual leaders, by virtue not only of their cloth but of their education also, all learning in these colonies still being subservient to religious studies.

The young man's own studies, however, had taught him something more than Church procedure, and his observation had strengthened his conclusions. He had emerged from Harvard, no longer able to accept unquestioningly all that he had accepted before. He searched his heart, as was his habit; and after heart-searchings he came to the conclusion that, temperamentally, he was not called. It was that very leadership of the church that dismayed him. He found he had grown unable to view with spiritual equanimity a religious power that swayed with such dominance the temporal affairs of the people. His views were against any such sway, for the church as a church.

He was uncertain.

He consulted with his young classmates and with some older friends. What did they think?

His friends thought that his particular type of earnestness, already prominent in student debate, did not lean toward the pulpit,—but leant, rather, toward legal oratory.

And, thus encouraged, John chose the bar. There was, indeed,

no other choice for one of his equipment and his situation, if a profession was to be his.

He studied the law—first in the office of Lawyer Putnam, and later in that of the more famous Gridley, following the custom, for the colleges offered no legal training.

In the meantime, he must earn a living.

So in the daytime he had taught school, appointed to a schoolmastership at Worcester. And back and forth he had ridden for his pupils, and alternately hated and liked his task; and sometimes wondered at his choice of the law, and felt that perhaps his inclination had really been to preach. He took all his tasks with a deep and somewhat rigid seriousness, conscious, in the case of the small minds he was molding in his days, of the future and its potentialities for them; cognizant, as much, of the responsibility he was assuming with this pioneer law-work—for as yet the number of practicing lawyers in and near Boston amounted only to a mere handful.

And always he was tremendously earnest, tremendously anxious to keep his path clear, to climb straight and be honored among a few. His work and his friendships! But his work was one of his friends; and the boys and girls he played with were all as honest and as earnest as he.

He liked girls—to be with them, to be gallant, to quote poetry, to read Shakespeare at them,—the give and take of youthful talk. He liked their society well enough; and they his, it seemed. Their parents liked his honorable bearing and his intellectual achievements, and rather sought him out.

Marriage, though, he had avoided as yet—on the serious advice of his tutor. Gridley had often warned him that marriage would hamper him, if he entered into it at this stage of his career.

And so, when he visited at the Quincy farm, or the Hancock house, or the Sewall homestead, some blushing daughter might find him very near to a declaration of undying love; but somehow he never quite arrived at one.

Until his friend, young Richard Cranch, a well-born lad from Devonshire who had found his way to Harvard and graduated with John, took him calling at Parson Smith's house in the neighboring town of Weymouth.

Dick was courting the Parson's oldest daughter, Mary. They would be married before long, and he wanted John to meet her.

John met her—and met, also, her younger sisters, Abigail and the little Elizabeth.

And at sight of Abby, all Gridley's warnings went by the board, forgotten. For he found her ravishing.

She had soft dark hair and luminous dark eyes—eyes with laughter behind them, and something more. Her nose was pure patrician. Her sweet mouth smiled away the not-too-great obtrusions of a very determined chin. She was dignified, with her dainty kerchief and her outstanding skirts and her high-heeled calamanco shoes. She was witty and quick—all, in fact, that John's secret dreams of a wife-to-be had pictured. That they should fall in love was as inevitable as that they should, in the course of time, grow older.

But John's courtship was no comfortable one; and not a bit of help did he get, or sympathy either, from anyone but the Parson, who secretly thought that Abby, in pinning her favor on such an earnest young man, had chosen rather well.

Only Abby herself repaid the slights—more than repaid them—was flatteringly miserable when her lover was away, as he must be frequently, about his circuit-riding.

By this time John had been practicing for six years, generously and enthusiastically introduced to the Bar by Gridley, under whose chaperonage he had been duly sworn in. He was twenty-nine years old. He had done well, distinguishing himself, and slowly working up one of the best practices in the district. His work absorbed him—his work and, now, his love.

And indeed, in that year, which was 1764, there were as yet

few ripples to disturb the calm sea of a man's work and a man's love, or to indicate the storm that was even then arising to sweep the country's life.

He came and he went, and the Parsonage at Weymouth grew used to him, and the dignified and capable Mrs. Smith gradually unbent to him.

And at last he won his Abigail; and there had been no greater care for Abby, after that, than that he must be to Boston, taking inoculation for the smallpox, for he courted danger when he rode his rounds.

" . . . . I hope you smoke your letters well, before you deliver them. Mamma is so fearful lest I should catch the distemper, that she hardly ever thinks the letters are sufficiently purified. Did you never rob a bird's nest? Do you remember how the poor bird would fly round and round, fearful to come nigh, yet not know how to leave the place. Just so they say I hover round Tom, whilst he is smoking my letters. . . .

"Tomorrow makes the fourteenth day. How many more are to come? I dare not trust myself with the thought. Adieu . . . excuse this very bad writing; if you had mended my pen it would have been better. Once more, adieu. Gold and silver have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee,—which is the affectionate regard of your

"A. S."

Mary's wedding had duly taken place, in 1763. Amid mutual congratulations and joyous celebration, the Parson chose as his text for his eldest girl's bridal,

"And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

On the twenty-fifth of October, 1764, Parson William, with an eye cocked toward the Quincys, the Nortons and the Tyngs, and the sheepish Weymouth parishioners who followed in the sacred footsteps of these, preached another tender marriage sermon. And his text on this occasion was:

"For John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, yet ye say 'He hath a devil!' "

CHAPTER II

STORM-CLOUDS

IN the Braintree farmhouse, love proved sweet and life flowed serene; but in the world outside, serenity was already being disturbed by periodic and significant convulsions.

The magnitude of current events had indeed soon produced in Abigail a secret anxiety which she was at pains to temper with optimism. There were reasons why John must not be allowed to foster the depression that overwhelmed him when the law courts of the province—temples, more than ever, of his hopes—were closed by order of the Governor in retaliation for the refusal of Massachusetts colonists to affix British revenue stamps to the articles they purchased.

She hid her trepidation, therefore, when he announced to her gloomily that this was the end, in all probability, of his law work and his lofty hopes as well. He could see no good prospect for the future, and the "stupefied behavior of his legal colleagues at this sudden shutting down of their office" did not encourage him.

More—it might mean the end of the liberty of his country. And that liberty was precious. Commencing in the days of the previous century, it had seen the finish of an earlier rule of oppression, and ever since had been freely enjoyed. Incidentally, this indulgent policy, though fostered by the friends of America in the British Parliament, had proved not unprofitable to the mother-country.

But now, it seemed, the indulgent parent had passed. The new King, George III, was taking on alarmingly the aspect of the traditional step-parent, and drawing the glove of autocracy over a hand that felt to be, if not of iron, at least of untempered steel.

John Adams had been admitted to the Bar in time to hear Otis, his senior, making a flaming protest in behalf of the self-taxing

American colonies against taxation by any act of British Parliament—a Parliament in which the colonies had no representative place. And from that day onward young Adams had given himself to the cause, and in speech and writing had made himself known as one of those who, conversant with the law, and studious of the Constitution, knew it to be not only unfair, as Otis had warmly held, but unconstitutional also, to tax unrepresented colonies. His Essay on Canon and Feudal Law had been read by him, at Gridley's express request, before the latter's select circle of friends, with gratifying results, and had immediately achieved publication, not only in Colonial papers, but in the English journals also. Many indeed had judged old Gridley the author, for the essay had been a masterly summing up of the necessities and rights of a dependent country that might be forced by circumstance to resist the edicts of a parent government, and even, in extremity, to cast away the bonds of dependence themselves.

Gradually John had become known—gradually accepted; and with the acceptance he was committed finally as a leading fighter in his Province's—if not his country's—cause.

Ideas, though, however patriotic, will not of themselves support a family. And John was soon to become a father. And the courts of law, where his living was, were closed.

But Abigail was hopeful—she would be nothing else.

"Tush!" cried Abigail. "Show the King how wrong-headed he is, and there'll be plenty of work for everyone!"

His Majesty's latest venture—or that of his new Prime Minister, Grenville—had been the Stamp Act, which required revenue stamps on all goods purchased from England by the colonists. As a selectman of Braintree, John had drawn up a draft of instructions for the town meeting, for the purpose of coping with this pernicious Act.

But if Abigail, sitting pleasantly relaxed, as to body at least, before the great brick cavern of her kitchen fire, her cooking and her heavier work finished for the day, waited in trepidation when the

instructions were submitted, we may be sure the trepidation did not show when the master of the house was expected home with his news. Doubtless he found her stitching at some small shift or bonnet, there in the pleasant firelight—and hiding the fact that she had been listening intently for his step.

With good news, however, he could hasten home from the old Town House, which stood in the center of the town by the burial ground, a mile away. And as she heard his step at last, she would rise to greet him as he entered, stamping the snow from him while he removed greatcoat and three-cornered hat. For outside, in the little triangular yard where the stone well stood, between their small cottage and his mother's larger, neighboring one,* the Massachusetts snow might lie inches deep, and the orchards and fields behind the house might be covered with the dazzling white blanket; but, once within, the warmth of gratification radiating from the square-set yeoman illumined Abigail, even as the dancing light of the flames flickered on wooden wainscoting, and picked out the china in the corner cupboard, and the pitchers and ladles that rested on the mantel high above her head.

The town meeting had approved his instructions, unanimously. For the time being, gloomy forebodings were forgotten. More, Draper, the printer, had requested a copy of the instructions. He was to publish them in his paper and they would travel all over the province.

Later, their gratification grew, for by the time Draper's paper had covered the province, no less than forty towns had adopted John Adams' instructions on the question of the Stamp Act, and even Boston herself, through one of her own townsmen—Cousin Sam Adams, that impatient Calvinist who, some said, dreamed already of an Independence Day—had embodied them in part in instructions to her representatives.

But gloom soon overtook John Adams again. The behavior of his fellow-barristers continued to worry him. They seemed inert,

* The two cottages now form a national shrine.

vanquished, powerless, doing nothing to help themselves out of their dilemma. And their pessimism was contagious.

"The bar," he wrote in his diary that day, relieving his feelings, "seem to me to behave like a flock of shot pigeons; they seem to be stopped; the net seems to be thrown over them, and they have scarcely courage left to flounce and to flutter. So sudden an interruption in my career is very unfortunate for me. I was but just getting into my gears, just getting under sail, and an embargo is laid upon the ship. Thirty years of my life are passed in preparation for business; I have had poverty to struggle with, envy and jealousy and malice of enemies to encounter, no friends, or but few, to assist me; so that I have groped in dark obscurity, till of late, and had but just become known and gained a small degree of reputation, when this execrable project was set on foot for my ruin as well as that of America in general, and of Great Britain."

But this constant reference of John's to malice of enemies and fewness of friends was a super-sensitiveness which Abigail, at least, would do nothing to nurture or encourage. She knew, and he knew, also, in his less gloomy moments, that he had at that moment as many friends and as few enemies as the next man; but if he went about glooming and repining, he might, indeed, obtain less of the first and more of the second—which consummation his independent spirit alone, though not to be likewise discouraged, was quite equal to bringing about.

So she urged him not to fear the worst, but to hope for the best and to look for a mounting up of affairs for himself, instead of enforced idleness. The province and its sister colonies would not be governed with injustice, or be forced to give without receiving. And it would be for honest men to show that they would not.

But the closing of the courts had finished his work, as far as John could see, and blighted his hopes and the hopes of his colleagues. There could be no work for the Bar, no rights for the people, no safeguards, no business, until the skies cleared and the dissension ended one way or another. The citizens of Boston had

already shown that they would have none of the King's Customs Commissioners. A mob of townsfolk had actually sacked the house of acting-Governor Hutchinson, and strewn his valuable papers over the street. "Stingy Tommy," they were calling him; and the King—worse. The disputed customs stamps had been burned before the Town House door; and an effigy of one of his Majesty's Commissioners had been hanged from the great elm on the Common, till by night it was cut down and borne boldly to Fort Hill and there burned, amid execrations. There must be trouble from all this —and there could be no work until it was over.

The rioting might be news to Abigail, but still she was determined to dissipate his fears if she could. The people of Braintree had reposed their confidence in him as a lawyer and as their selectman. There was work for them that must be done—and he would help in it.

Fortitude was soon rewarded. The town of Boston selected John Adams to appear, with Attorney-General Otis and Master Gridley, as its counsel before the Governor and his aides, pleading that the courts of law might be reopened. It came in the nature of an accolade.

John was now most tremendously heartened. His depression went; his ambition, his ideals and his love for his country rose again and multiplied, and he went at his new task with zest. The Act must be repealed, for the people, as Abigail had said, would never submit to any such unbalanced levy; the courts must be reopened; the wheels of that ancient government which had almost been a true self-government must once more be set in vigorous motion; and John Adams must help.

So he appeared, as colleague with Otis, the lion of his junior days, and with Gridley, his learned patron; and it happened that the honor of the occasion fell largely to him. Otis had already committed himself against the view that the taxation was unconstitutional, and contended only that it was unbalanced and grossly unfair; Gridley also. But young Adams was free to, and did, make

and carry his point. And with it he emerged a little further from obscurity.

He was in harness again. New tasks abroad—and new tasks in the home also.

For by the time events had recompensed their pleadings, Abigail was gone for a time from farm and from kitchen, and servants and master bore their share of her manifold household and outdoor duties.

The advent of a small Abby on July fourteenth, 1765, was a signal for joy. The babe, in her wooden crib before the kitchen logs, became at once the center of the household. More than ever did John find it hard to tear himself away.

But Abigail did not allow her new dignity of motherhood to keep her over-long from wifely tasks. As soon as her strength permitted, she was back at her wheel and her churning and her baking. Sooner, indeed, for when John came riding home post-haste one day with joyful news, he found both his Abbys unexpectedly abed, laid low with an attack of the whooping-cough.

He must mount the narrow stairs, and blurt his news there, by the side of the bed with its curving, spotless canopy—thrilling news.

The efforts of Massachusetts and of the good Burgesses of the Province of Virginia, whose protest was an equally strong one, had been rewarded. The new British Parliament had repealed the Stamp Act!

Boston was in raptures, and, indeed, the whole Province, though, strangely enough, the little town of Braintree was showing itself too apathetic for the vigorous John. Only his Abigail's illness, and their babe's, prevented his journeying with them forthwith to Boston, to celebrate with the rest, or to his brother Cranch's, or to Abigail's father's at Weymouth.

Visits to the family, and from the family, took up much of their leisure time. The sisters, and the brothers-by-marriage, also, were

very dear to each other. To Salem, where the Cranches lived, along the seacoast to the north, took best part of a day. John and his lady would set out early, on horseback or in the chaise, breaking their journey, perchance, at Boston town, where they must cross the ferry; breaking it again at Hill's tavern, by the brook at Malden, where they would partake of their hearty midday meal, eating well, and drinking well, too, to be sure. John liked his glass of hard cider well enough to start each day with it, and Abigail was not averse to a sup of punch. They would oat their horses at hostlers' stables; and arrive at Brother Cranch's, in narrow-streeted, water-lapped Salem, in good time to drink a dish of tea.

A long journey, but the merry evenings, with a company augmented by friends picked up on the way, and carried along with a sure welcome for the visit, more than repaid. The ladies would prattle round the tea-table, of frills and furbelows; and the men, too, were by no means above discussing silks and broadcloths and laces on their own account—in days when there were no deeper matters, save friendly books, to discuss. There would be music, and a game or two—a card game, or a round, merry frolic—and it would be a reluctant party that broke itself up to retire for a good night's sleep before travelers must be setting out on the return journey.

John's mother—she had been Suzanna Boylston before her marriage, a niece of the famous Dr. Zabaliel Boylston of Brookline, who had introduced to Massachusetts the inoculation for the smallpox—lived on the farm, close by. His brothers and their families lived with her—for his father had died. And it was no great ride to Parson Smith's, at Weymouth, or to Grandmother Quincy's Mount Wollaston mansion. And good old Dr. Tufts, Abby's uncle, and lovely Cousin Dorothy Quincy and her sisters and their much respected father, were fairly close neighbors, to be reached with ease.

So there were frequent reunions at one or the other homestead, and a family closely knitted.

The year 1767 brought a brother to little Abby, and brought sadness, too, once more, to mingle with the joy; for Abigail's grandfather, the Honorable John, lay dying.

They named this boy-baby for the old Colonel—Johnny Quincy, he came to be called—and while he was still infinitesimal, the Adamses moved to Boston and settled there within reach of John's law office.

They moved in the spring, after the grandfather's death. John had secured lodgings for them in a large house in Brattle Square —it was known as the White House—to which he bore his family in the utmost satisfaction. It would not be quite so hard, now, to ride off on the circuit. At least the hour's daily ride from Braintree to Boston had been done away with.

And the outlook? It seemed clear enough, though the young and ill-advised monarch on the English throne yet held to his determination to wring a revenue from his unrepresented Colonies. The efforts of another of his ministers, Charles Townshend, had placed new taxes on paper, paint, glass and tea. The colonists ignored them. Further, some of the Colonies, Massachusetts among them, had renewed an agreement made two years before, on the occasion of the initial levying of the Stamp Duty, not to import British goods. By no means all the traders contributed to this, of course; but already the factions, for and against the power of the mother country, and the middle faction of those who did not yet know whether they were for or against, were fairly well formed. There were those who reviled "Stingy Tommy" Hutchinson, the acting Governor, and called him traitor to his own, and accused him of a secret correspondence not to American interests. There were those who defended him.

Yet it was not in any way possible to believe that the King was without some clear-sighted advisers, who would see the whole thing by the light of reason.

Meanwhile the agitators were busy. There were many who longed—for differing, interested or disinterested, reasons of their

BIRTHPLACES OF JOHN ADAMS AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

(John Adams was born in house at right, in upper right-hand front room; John Quincy Adams in house at left.)

own—to see a bloody war; and these were on both sides of the ocean. There were others, not so warlike but as ardent, working for a peaceable understanding and a guarantee. John's cousin, Sam Adams—thirteen years his senior, and a leader of the popular movement—had recently enlisted the wealthy John Hancock in his Sons of Liberty. He told John this one day, as they paced together beneath the trees, Sam in his familiar red cloak and hard black hat, his eyes very blue in a pale, homely countenance, his figure stocky and muscular like his darker-clad kinsman's. And he told him much besides, of that which was hoped and that which was already under way.

Hancock was almost as well known to John as Samuel himself. They had played together in Braintree yards as little boys, before Hancock became the moneyed head of his family. In the hands of such men, John felt, the cause was safe.

He rode away on his circuit, then, happy in the thought that his family and his office were now in one and the same place; and hopeful of the future. America should be self-governing and self-taxing, or she should play a just part in the affairs of both countries. The distance between them and the very nature of the colonization indicated that. And if hotheads refused to see Colonists as Englishmen, entitled to English privileges and English justice, there must be coolheads to balance them—men of a truer vision.

He rode away happily enough from a prosperous Boston—a town of farmers and traders and home-makers, with roots and traditions in an England that could not change. A Boston free, untrammeled. A Boston at peace.

His good wife watched him go, reluctantly, praying already for his safe return.

And hardly had the sound of his horse's hoofs died from her ears before another sound assailed them—a sinister sound, that was strange to her ears as yet, but was to become all too tragically familiar.

A booming of guns, from ships in the harbor!

The rolling of drums; the tramp of marching feet; the rattle of heavy artillery, being dragged over paving-stones; the shouting of orders.

And seven hundred redcoats had come to shatter the peace of Boston! Seven hundred British soldiers had come to show the Colonies that they must obey, or take the consequences.

It was to this that John Adams returned—to the tramp of feet and the clatter of drilling in Brattle Square; to a matinal alarum of drum and fife.

And he found that one of those to whom the bewildered people of Boston looked to take them out of their troubles was himself.

Under the windows each evening sang Samuel's organized Sons of Liberty, with flutes and violins to banish into forgetfulness the drum and fife of the morning.

It was flattering—but not more so than the concern which the Tories were showing over his successful efforts against unlawful taxation and unmerited oppression.

Through his old friend and neighbor, Jonathan Sewall, the Attorney General, he was urged to accept the office of Advocate General in the Court of Admiralty. It was a royal favor—a lucrative position—a stepping-stone to greater court offices.

But the man who accepted royal favor now was no free soul to think for his own on colonial issues. He refused.

He wished to serve his own people, and to adhere to his own principles, and though the warships of those who now suspected him hovered in the bay, he had but one fear—for his wife and his children.

CHAPTER III

BLOODSHED

ABIGAIL'S babies saved her in these days from terror and from blank despair. Only with her babies, when John was on his

journeying to the reopened courts of his familiar circuit, could she find life endurable.

She could even laugh at little Abby's grown-up care of the small brother, and at her maternal lullabies.

"Come, Papa," little Abby would sing, trying to rock the baby's hooded wooden cradle with the tips of her toes. Perched there on the edge of the rail-backed yellow chair, in her stiff-boarded stays and voluminous skirts, she would look like a miniature of her mother, though she had her father's face and her father's wide-open, serious eyes. "Come, Papa, come home to brother Johnny!"

Abigail wrote of the lullabies, and of the children, to John, in letters as serene as she could make them—letters that concealed much of her need of him, and her perplexity.

For Boston was a city of perplexity now, and of a brooding menace.

Erstwhile, it had lain peaceful amid its triplet hills, protected by their outflung arms, smiled upon by the islands that dotted the bay. Even Castle Island, where a garrison of regulars had always lain, had been a friend—a congenial neighbor whose sons had fought in battle side by side with the Provincials.

Charlestown, to the north, had been a pleasant ferry ride. Beyond it, Bunker's Hill, and Breed's, had invited rest and solitude on summer days. To the south, more of these friendly hills—Dorchester, and Penn's Hill, at the foot of whose hurrying slope the town of Braintree lay.

They had looked on peaceful Boston, with its busy fingers in the water—the wharves, the ropewalks, the docks for full-rigged vessels, the yards. They had smiled on her jutting church steeples—the Old South, the Old North, Brattle Street and Hollis Street Churches, the towers of Faneuil Hall, where the town meetings were held now, and of the old Town House, where selectmen had for so long made the parochial laws and proved themselves adequate sons of liberty.

Boston—that town of crooked, stone-paved roads and sudden squares, of solid houses and narrow-paned stores, of offices and

mansions and of a population of sixteen thousand citizens, almost the whole of whom could boast (and ever had, in the past!) of English descent.

It was changed.

The hills frowned down on Boston now, and the erstwhile smiling people had begun to frown in sympathy—to frown and to scheme; and also to prepare—for what?

At the Green Dragon Tavern the Masons were meeting secretly, presided over by Doctor Joseph Warren, a close friend of the Adamses, and a former ardent fighter against that ancient foe, the smallpox. Doctor Joseph, an officer of the Provincial army, had found a new and as potent foe to contend with.

Silversmith Revere, young Dawes and Knox, and boys like them, Abigail heard, as well as men older, but not more ardent, were swelling these mysterious masonic conclaves.

Uniforms sprang up here and there—more uniforms than Boston had seen since the French and Indian wars had been won. Those wars had been paid for, in part, by Colonial funds. The wise head of the English government of those days, Pitt, had requested financial aid when the campaign funds stood sorely diminished—asked it as a favor and a gesture of loyalty. And the Colonists had not held back.

But now, with King George proclaiming that the Colonies had gone untaxed long enough, and that the final losses incurred by the battles that had kept France from gaining overwhelming power in the new country must be met by revenue tributes, perforce, from the American provinces of Great Britain—now, they would resist, for if they did not they must relinquish the key to their cherished liberty—the right of self-taxation.

So redcoats came to resist resistance; and buff and blue coats—patriot colors—sprang up here and there in Boston homes. And secret arms and orders. And the designation "minute-man" for one who would be ready in certain emergencies. . . .

And over all, trouble brooded.

For two years, soldiers paraded before the windows; through two years the iron sank deeper and deeper into the people's souls. Britain had determined, not only to tax them, but to subdue them. Britain had listened to those who willfully misrepresented, and turned a deaf—or at least a deafened—ear to reason.

Abigail, watching John, knew that he was more than half afraid of being carried away on the wave of popular emotion before he was sure its onward sweep was inevitable. His country meant everything to him—America, where he and his father and his father's father had been born.

But he must be certain. Deceit, political concealment, self-advancement through the sacrifice of his less sophisticated fellows—all were alien to his spirit. Heart and soul and right hand were at the service of his country, but first his brain must receive the pass-word.

In his serious, urgent way he was watching the soldiers of the occupation—their reaction on and daily dealings with the townspeople. Their manner was brusque. Many of them, indeed, were resentful at being sent here at all. But an honest man could not fail to see that the townsfolk, for their part, did everything they could to provoke the roughness, and that there were those who spurred the insurgents on, besides, with artful propaganda.

"Jeer at the lobsters! What right has King George to plant his soldiers here? What right has King George to tax us? They don't call us Englishmen. They don't give us Englishmen's rights."

And the more daring whispered, "What right has King George to rule us at all?"

For the present, nothing more than jeers, and a few scuffling encounters, had served to relieve the simpler townsfolks' indignation. But they sought and found the crudest retaliations for the violation of their peace. They made the redcoats' lives, in short, miserable when they could. And the redcoats were but human. . . .

What followed might have been foreseen; but not the extent of the shadow that it flung upon the future.

The constant grinding of arms beneath their windows had proved too much for the Adamses. John had moved his family at last to quieter lodgings in Cole Lane, a short distance away, but further from the center of activity. Abigail was alone here, with her babies, on the evening of the fifth of March, in the year 1770. John was no further away than at his club, which had met at Mr. Henderson Inches' house, in the southerly part of the town; but she was nervous when he was away from her at all, for she was in poor health. A third child, a girl, had been born here in Boston, and had died at one year old. It had broken the mother, added to the stress of life at the moment. Moreover, another child would be born very soon.

Abigail heard the fire-bells start to ring—ring, furiously. Outside in the Lane people were running. Through the window she could see them with their buckets and their bags, running to seek the flames, and douse them.

But the flame that had aroused that night was not to die for many a day. In half an hour the street was filled with citizens—men in caped coats and tricorne hats; women in full-skirted gowns and shoulder-kerchiefs, with hooded capes thrown over; children, even to the smallest, garbed like their elders; boys and girls with tied-back hair, in bunchy skirts or grown-up waistcoats. Out there they were shouting, thronging, straining to know the truth, which nobody could tell them.

From all over the town the people milled, making for the center. And with the rest came John Adams and his fellow club-members, seeking, like others, the fire for which those bells were ringing so furiously.

They found no fire—but presently reports began to run through the crowds like fire itself. There had been bloody happenings in King Street, before the Town House. There were bodies being carried away from there. The redcoats had fired on a crowd of citizens, and there were many wounded, besides the dead. . . .

Rumor grew—sometimes affording real news, sometimes obscuring it.

And slowly the peace of Boston faded out utterly, and the night became an inferno.

Mrs. Adams was at a window, watching for her husband, filled with dark fears which the accounts that had carried to her had done nothing to allay. She saw him at last, pushing his way swiftly through the crowds below, and into the house. He sped upstairs to her, drawing her to the big couch in their living-room. Seated there with her, her hands clasped in his, he tried to soothe her, though his own breast was filled with apprehension. He told her what he knew of the fracas near the Town House, softening it as much as he could.

The curfew, it seemed, had been ignored. It usually was. The British sentry before the Town House had clouted a barber's boy with his musket, for jeering at a passing officer of His Majesty's Twenty-ninth. The boy, running through the snow that was falling hard, had yelled his woes to everyone he met. Down at the ropewalks, whither he carried his tale, a crowd of citizens had armed themselves with billets of wood and other small implements, and returned, in force, to King Street. There had been jeers for the redcoat that struck the poor apprentice boy. And the jeers had gradually turned ugly, and become threats. Missiles had been flung, and the sentry had loaded his musket and warned the mob.

Someone had run to Captain Preston, lodged with the guard above a warehouse across the way. With seven men of the guard, and a corporal to lead them, the Captain has hastened to the scene of the affray. But the crowd had refused to disperse at sight of a handful of armed men. With "Yah, redcoats!" and "Bloody-backs! Lobsters!" they had dared the King's soldiers to fire. By this time wiser men had heard of the outburst, and approached, seeking in vain to make themselves heard—to avert a catastrophe that might sound the knell of liberty indeed. But no one would heed them.

Young Knox, a bookseller's assistant and an officer of the Provincials, had approached the British Captain and, in stentorian voice that was later to become famous, demanded to know if the soldiers' muskets were loaded, and whether Preston would give the command to fire. The Englishman had denied that he would, and vowed he would do all in his power to prevent it.

And then, one story had it, someone had knocked a soldier's rifle from his hands and simultaneously hit him over the head with a stick. The soldier, infuriated, had picked up the firing-piece and, without orders, pulled the trigger. More shots had followed the first. And each one had found its mark. Five citizens were dead; eight more, seriously wounded—though by the time John had reached the scene of the melée, citizens had already removed the dead and the wounded from before the straining soldiery, whom officers were holding back. Ominous small pieces of artillery stood about the Town House. And all over the town, people were swarming about the redcoats, cursing them, belaboring them as they knelt in the squares at the "ready," bayonets fixed. . . .

John could be glad, now, of that move from Brattle Square. At least his dear ones were a little apart from the greatest massing of troops, the more terrifying sounds. For Brattle Square, like King Street, was scarlet with ranks of rigid soldiers, muskets ready, bayonets poised, while momentarily the atmosphere thickened with dread.

But he begged Abigail not to have fear. Whatever might come of this, nothing should harm her or their babes.

"I fear not for myself," she said, "—or even for our little ones. I fear—I know not what I fear—for our country. What can happen to it after this? What can come of this night but sorrow, and further bloodshed? Their social ties are all our people have. The cutting down of their dear ones can lead to nothing but strife."

But both John and she, after a while, had to busy themselves, trying to drown their thoughts. The orders and the general tumult had awakened the whole household, and the children were up and

huddling to her. She must quiet little Abby and Johnny Quincy, and put them back to bed; and John insisted that she herself obtain some rest.

Bodily rest, perhaps—but there was no sleep for anyone, young or old, in Boston that night. People milled about the soldiers endlessly, bells rang, drums beat, there was the ceaseless cry, now, of "Townsfolk, turn out, turn out!" and "To arms! To arms!" The furious resentment at this "massacre" was steadily mounting. Commands rang out without respite; troops reinforced troops as the tumult grew.

But the tumult reached its zenith, for that one night, at least. Word came that Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson, under pressure from the selectmen, had ordered all troops to be withdrawn to their barracks. He had spoken from the balcony of the Town House, and had given the enraged citizenry his solemn promise that justice should be done.

Behind him in the Town House, as he spoke, the governing body was sitting in council. Outside, after the rowdies had gone home at last, there remained a number of worthy citizens, waiting for the outcome of the conference.

It came in the darkness, just before the dawn. Captain Preston had surrendered himself; had been questioned; had made a statement; and had been imprisoned.

The citizens retired.

CHAPTER IV

JUSTICE

IT WAS morning, and the great pictures on the walls of the Council Chamber in the Town House—full-length likenesses of a James and a Charles of England, who had not dreamed of American dissent—gazed down on an unique and unprecedented scene.

The Governor being absent on his Majesty's call, the Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Mr. Hutchinson, presided at the Council table. At his side sat Dalrymple, Commander of his Majesty's military forces; and eight-and-twenty councilors made up the board.

Their wigs were voluminous and very white; their surcoats resplendent and red. On the table before them lay, in a neat row, their gold-laced hats. And facing them, erect, dominating, exhorting this noble assemblage, stood one, the clerk of the House of Representatives—a townsman of Boston, of the bourgeoisie; a brewer's son, and a brewer himself till the puzzle of commerce had bested him and he had become a scribbler, a dreamer and a patriot.

Samuel Adams.

John heard of it in his office close by the Town House, where he came early that day. Sam Adams was closeted with the Governor and Council. He had demanded the withdrawal of the troops from Boston. He had vowed that soldiery and citizenry could no longer live together in peace. He was crushing objection, vanquishing argument, breaking the determination of the acting Governor to keep the soldiers in Boston at all costs.

Many came by John Adams' office that day. Some came to gossip and to speculate, though none of them too hopefully, on the outcome. And one, at least, came charged with a more serious mission.

It was a mission calculated to fill Mr. Adams with dismay.

The caller was an Irishman named Forrest, a close friend of Captain Preston, the British officer. He had come from the prison just now, with his startling request.

Captain Preston wished counsel for his defense, and could obtain none. But Mr. Josiah Quincy, Jr., a colleague of Mr. Adams, had promised he would engage if Mr. Adams would; and if Mr. Adams wouldn't, neither would he.

It was a crucial moment for a test of John's ideals and of that which lay behind his intense love for the land of his birth. He realized it, and all the consequences that a consent might bring upon him; but he could not hesitate.

"Counsel, Mr. Forrest," he said, courteously, "ought to be the very last thing that an accused person should want for in a free country. It is my opinion that the Bar ought to be independent and impartial at all times and in every circumstance. Without doubt persons whose lives are at stake ought to have the counsel they prefer. But there is one point I would like to make clear: Captain Preston must be sensible that this will be as important a cause as was ever tried in any court or country of the world. Now, every lawyer must hold himself responsible, not only to his country, but also to the highest and most infallible of all tribunals, for the part he may act. Captain Preston must, therefore, expect from me no art or address, no sophistry or prevarication, in such a cause, nor anything more than fact, evidence and law will justify."

The blond Mr. Forrest, an unwonted carelessness in his usually faultless English attire showing his extreme agitation, seized John's hand, and assured him that Captain Preston requested and desired no more.

"He has such an opinion of you, Mr. Adams, from all he has heard from all parties, that he can cheerfully trust his life with you upon those principles. And, sir, furthermore, as God Almighty is my judge, I believe him an innocent man."

"That must be ascertained by his trial. I bid you tell Captain Preston that, if he thinks he cannot have a fair trial of that issue without my assistance, without hesitation, he shall have it."

Mr. Forrest, almost unable to voice his gratitude in his friend's behalf further, wrung John's hand, and pressed upon him, at Captain Preston's request, a guinea piece as a retainer. It was accepted without comment. Lawyers' fees were more or less set by precedent in that day—eight guineas for an important case, five for a less important, two for a continuance, or adjournment. And, in any event—John Adams happened to be engaging, characteristically, for his conscience' sake.

Before his caller left he had pledged himself for the soldiers, too.

It flew through the streets like magic.

"Adams has engaged for Preston and the soldiers! Adams—and young Quincy, his wife's kinsman—they have engaged for Preston and the soldiers!"

That which he had foreseen came down on him like an avalanche. The loyalists—those for whom the King could do no wrong—smiled behind their hands, and said that young Adams was a wise man. Those who were jealous of John's achievements as lawyer and leader told each other that the promise of fat fees was what probably had tempted him. Even his friends criticized him. And for the time being popular feeling did not know what to make of it. He was avoided—mistrusted, for a while, at least.

But Abigail, though she had been overcome by tears when he told her, steadfastly encouraged him—he could have done no other thing. As a lawyer, he could not have refused. As a patriot, he could not have refused, or what was patriotism but a one-sided affair? No just person could condemn him for such a step.

Yet there were enough to condemn. Young Josiah Quincy, her cousin, had worse than John to undergo, for not even his nearest and dearest would uphold him. He was a slim, fair-haired, delicate youth,—something of a prodigy at the Bar, where all his colleagues were his seniors by a few years at least. Josiah's own father, the elder Josiah, called down condemnation on his son for thus engaging, and informed him in no measured terms that he had taken a step that not only would be open to deadly criticism, but would seem to justify the popular disapproval of the practice of the law. Josiah, Jr., was undismayed. The tenets of the Bar, he said, called for adequate defense of all accused persons; an accused person was presumed to be innocent until he had been proven guilty; and, as for the criticism of which his father spoke—why, he despised it.

He was a brave lad. His own brother, Samuel, was now his Majesty's Solicitor-General for the Province—an ardent Royalist. As Solicitor-General, Samuel would play his part in the prosecution of the British prisoners.

They might have laughed at the irony of it, had they not been overwhelmed by the very nature of events. For John and Josiah on the one side, patriots, were defending the King's soldiers from the wrath of patriots; while Samuel Quincy, royalist, on the other, was accusing the King's soldiers of a wrong against the "rebels!"

There was work to be done, however, and many things to come to pass. Research was lengthy and complicated. Questioning succeeded questioning. The people wanted Preston's blood and the blood of his soldiers, as retribution. There were many to swear that the British Captain and his men had received no provocation for their action. Letters passed from the accused to their government, and from the government to the Councils of the Province. Preston made a statement of his case for the benefit of his critics in Boston and in England, but it reached London strangely altered, with many new touches that the Captain would not recognize for his own. The Boston committee of citizens—Sam Adams was of their number—that had been elected to look into the incidents preceding and following the event now generally known as the Boston Massacre, demanded a retraction of the charges Preston's statement contained; but Preston felt that he had said too much already, and was silent. It was for the Committee to pray of their friends in Britain not to credit promiscuous documents, or ill-founded statements.

Denunciations of both sides appeared in the Boston papers; were retracted, or repeated.

And adjournment followed adjournment.

But meanwhile the pressure from the Citizen's Committee had sent from the city the two entire regiments that had occupied it.

The redcoats marched out, and took their time about it, too. The Sons of Liberty had guaranteed safe conduct for the troops if they were removed; but the delay annoyed the townsfolk so that the guarantee could not be made good until some of the Sons volunteered to march with the "bloody-backs," and share contumely with them.

At last, however, they were gone—all except nine of their number, who must be tried for murder at the August Assizes.

Captain Preston was tried, alone, first; the soldiers later, before a Bench of four justices in their silken robes, seated at the high desk in the paneled courtroom of that which was once more the Town House.

And the keynote of the trials was sanity—a calm after the storm.

Jury, Judges and defense counsel, with but one or two possible exceptions,—and those on the bench,—were against King George and his works. Yet the verdict, after many weary days of arguing each point, and many eagerly-seized opportunities for plain speaking in the cause of liberty, was "Not Guilty, in accordance with the evidence," except in the cases of two of the common soldiers, who were found guilty of manslaughter and, praying benefit of the court, were branded on the hand and released with a fine.

And, in spite of the fact that a great number of "eye-witnesses" had testified heatedly against the accused, few critical voices were heard when the verdict was announced. The soldiers gone, distrust, unrest would seem to have departed with them.

Indeed, ill-faith had departed earlier. John had news for Abigail before the verdict day was reached. Beyond doubt he hastened home with it, unsmiling in the face of the clouded future, but confident, at least, that he would surprise his "dearest friend" with more than a mere recital of the daily courtroom proceedings.

The people had not long failed of their confidence in him, for he had done no less than his duty as an upright member of the Bar. And now he found that the popular trust in him was too deep-rooted to wither at one false blast.

The people of Boston had chosen him as their Representative, to fill a new-made vacancy in the House.

More—he had actually gone to Faneuil Hall, and addressed a Boston town meeting for the first time. Earnestly he accepted the choice, at the same time expressing his sense of the "difficulty and danger of our days, and my appreciation of the importance of the

trust, and my fears that I might prove insufficient to fulfill the expectations of our people. And when I was done, many of them came forward to congratulate me."

But none, we may be sure, more fervently than the dark-eyed, dignified young matron whose home had been, and was to be again, a White House.

CHAPTER V

DEFIANCE

ABIGAIL, was by no means insensible of the danger to herself and her children that this turn of fate might bring, while for John her fears were endless, though she would not show them. They thought alike on the main project. He had done as he ought; and she was willing to share in what might come, and to place her faith in Providence.

But, if there was pride in it—and surely there was—there was little joy. The seriousness of playing a part in even local politics just now did not escape their minds. And but few matters politic were local, for what one town meeting decided to do might affect all other towns of the Province; and what one province's legislature passed reacted on the several other provinces which totaled, with it, the British Colonies in America. The Burgesses of Virginia had taken the initiative in many moves of protest, and these had made their mark in her sister domains. Similarly, what Massachusetts did today might—nay, almost certainly would—be paid for by all.

As for John's self, he was placing at stake a flourishing law business—the most flourishing, perhaps, at that time, in the Province. And he was placing at stake his health, which was by no means as robust as his looks indicated.

Above all, he felt increasingly that he was deliberately devoting

his "dearest Nabby" and their children to ruin—himself perhaps to death, for which they would be the sufferers.

"I see not how I may go through the thorns and leap the precipices before me and escape with my life. Yet a sense of my duty to others bids me do it—bids me sacrifice those bright prospects that have enlivened our hearts, and devote myself to the endless labor and anxiety, if not the infamy and the destruction, that this may bring——"

Their fears proved groundless, for the moment, at least. John Adams went into public life reluctant,—for a conviction, as he did everything. But nature removed him again, after a year of more or less uneventful legislation. He grew sick, and was forced to retire, with his wife and family, once more to the beloved farm at Braintree, which seemed so still and so peaceful after the whirl and upheaval they had passed through.

Health and strength slowly came back as he walked with his "dearest friend" in the orchards and the meadows of his boyhood. The gap that death had made the year before had been filled by another joyous birth, and a little Charles Adams had come to make the household more contented still.

Husband and wife walked together along the country lanes, and lingered on the hilltops or in the village, gossiping with friends—dallying while yet they might, and wooing health. And on holy days they went to meeting with their older children, to the ancient church where John, as a child himself, had used to sit awed by the heads of the elders before him. And they prayed for continued peace.

But it was not to be.

Once more John went riding his circuit of forty miles around. It was his world—a globe beyond which he never expected to try his wings. Once more both he and Abigail fancied the weeks of parting an eternity indeed, and counted the hours to reunion.

They had many friends—new ones and some of the friends of youth as well. As formerly, Abigail wrote many letters—brilliant,

well-phrased, knowledgeful letters; paid many visits and did her many chores. And John, when he was home, took her walking or indulged in relished discussions with lifelong cronies.

Abigail's closest friend was a friend of her own and of her sisters' girlhood—Mercy Warren. Her name had been Mercy Otis in those early days—she was a sister of John's brilliant colleague, now, alas, to be no longer brilliant or active, a martyr to his zeal and his work. Mercy had married another friend of John Adams'—James Warren, a resident of Plymouth, close by.* Both husband and wife were of outstanding intellect; both ardently in sympathy with all that John and Abigail held dear. Thus it was a dual pleasure to visit the Warrens at their gambrel-roofed home among the trees of Plymouth village, or to be visited by them, and discuss life and country and philosophy over a warming dish of tea.

But, ah—that tea! "That baneful weed," as Abigail called it. It was that tea which tore them from peaceable social life and even from the farm once more, and took them back to Boston—to dread again, and probable disaster.

No lodgings for John this time. He bought a modest house in Queen Street, convenient to his office, and once again settled his family in the town, as comfortably as might be, while this business of the tea was settled.

For tea was burning the throats of the Colonists now. Tea was, at last, the only thing remaining taxed—a finger of warning from a hand that would rule as it wished.

And in a cargo of tea, trouble was bobbing on the waves towards America.

The tax itself was but a gesture, and accepted as such. American consumers would—if they accepted the tax and the tea—actually be paying less than their English cousins. The avowed purpose was to preserve the right of the Crown to tax wheresoever and whomsoever it chose. The obvious further motive was to render the

* James Warren, afterwards prominent in his State's government, and Dr. Joseph Warren, who was killed at Bunker Hill, were not related.

position of the Colonists untenable—or to prove them mercenary if they accepted the taxed tea at less than British cost.

Also the East India Company happened to be in a precarious state of business. And the merchants in these ports of America had actually, for many years, under the very nose of his Majesty's government, been importing their tea, in part, it was true, from the subsidized Company, but in great part also from less licensed sources in Holland and elsewhere. This must be stopped.

So agents of the Company had been appointed, in Philadelphia, in New York, in Charleston and in Boston, with orders to receive large consignments of tea from the Company and to pay the tax on it immediately upon its landing.

That being the case, said the "rebels"—since the tax would be paid once the tea was landed—the tea must not be landed.

New York, Philadelphia, Charleston were dealing with their assigned agents in their own separate ways, trying to persuade these gentlemen, in spite of their orders, to send their tea back the way it had come.

Boston now proceeded to do likewise.

But without success.

And Boston, wise in the aftermath of resistance, grew grave-eyed once more. For the tea should not land!

John, though he had relinquished his seat in the House when ill-health had carried him away to Braintree, had sat in on its councils since his return, and knew what was afoot.

The news that three ships had actually arrived was doubly disturbing. Somehow the question—the friction—had not appeared so urgent while the tea-ships were on their way; but here! It was as though the three vessels had arrived and touched the shore full-charged with some explosive substance. At the knowledge, the very atmosphere grew pregnant, laden with conflicting, destroying sparks of will.

The ships—three Indiamen—were tied up to Griffin's Wharf. And the agents were determined to land their cargoes.

But—effectual opposition was still being put up. The proceedings of the townspeople were united, spirited and firm.

And the women's hearts, and the men's also, could well beat faster. For if the flame were kindled, to what a conflagration might it not spread? The mind recoiled from the thought that human blood might be shed—and in that worst of all conflicts, civil war.

Yet, though Abigail might tremble—and she confessed her heart raced at every unaccustomed sound—every whistle and every cry—she could still call down eternal reproach and ignominy on those who had been instrumental in causing these apprehensions.

She was one of many. The tea should not land! The Sons of Liberty were said to have some scheme—but no man dared talk of it save in whispers. Everything else had been tried. The Committee appointed by the town had sat in conference with Hutchinson for days, striving to induce him to allow the ships to depart immediately without unloading. He had refused, first and last, and had betaken himself, they said, to his country-seat at Milton. Some said he feared a mobbing like the last. . . .

Sam Adams and Doctor Warren and their friends had also been to Rotch, the master of one of the ships—the *Dartmouth*—who was said to be sympathetic with the Colonists and anxious, also, beyond a doubt, to avoid trouble. He had agreed to go with a deputation to Milton, to beg the Governor's permission to depart with his cargo. It was to be the final effort.

Two gatherings took place on December sixteenth, 1775, in Boston.

On that day Josiah Quincy and Samuel Adams held, expectant, a vast concourse of the citizens of the town, at the Old South Church, while Rotch and the deputation were in final conference with the Governor. On that day also a second gathering—rather more secretive and mysterious—was taking place in a carpenter's shop, by the light of a candle held by a small boy. It looked like a gathering of native Indians, in all their warpaint and gaudy

blankets; but here and there one could glimpse a snowy ruffle being thrust away from sight, and a fine skirted coat being drawn close beneath a blanket.

The "Indians" joined the town meeting just after the deputation had returned with the Governor's final word, which was "No."

But only for a moment.

Then, befeathered, their hatchets in their hands, they were racing down the street, through Milk Street further on, toward Pearl Street, at the foot of which stood Griffin's Wharf. . . With war-whoops, and with little songs not quite so typical of the Indian brave, they added to their party as they ran along. . . .

Some patriot wag had asked, with a twinkle in his eye, whether tea could be made with salt water.

They showed him!

Up on the decks of the *Eleanor,* the *Beaver* and the *Dartmouth* came the crates of tea, trundled by willing hands.

Crash! from the Indian hatchets; and the wooden sides were splintered.

Zoop! Over the sides with the little black leaves—an inky avalanche.

And the bay was one vast teapot. Tea from salt-water, indeed!

The Indians danced back, whooping and yelling, filling the streets with cries that added nought to the dignity of the occasion, but at least added a quota of noise. Ho, there! Is that not the house where they say the Admiral is lodged? Let us give him a rouser, the old British Admiral!

So they called three long "Whoopeee's"—for many of their number were mere apprentice lads, though strong enough for a job of dumping. . . .

A head came poking out of a window—a bluff red face peering out beneath a wig.

"Well, boys," cried the Admiral, in a voice of thunder, "you've had a fine pleasant evening for your Indian caper, haven't you? But mind—you have got to pay the fiddler yet!"

Young Lendall Pitts, whose ferocious feathers and splinter-stuck hatchet made him look almost like a real sachem, spoke back to the seafaring aristocrat with his old red face dimly stuck through the window.

"Oh, never mind!" cried Pitts, ingratiatingly. "Never mind, Squire. Just come out here, and we'll settle the bill in two minutes!"

The Indians howled.

The window shut with a bang.

The Boston Tea Party was over.

CHAPTER VI

AUTHORITY

IT WAS a gesture of defiance, but hardly one calculated to evoke more temperate dealing. And it evoked none.

Poor Boston!

Poor Abigail Adams, with her patriot man and her small children!

There were four of the little brood now: Johnny Quincy, Abby, Charles and a newly-arrived Thomas. For their sakes, life must go along as usual—or as near to the usual as might be under new conditions—ominously changing conditions.

Johnny could read by now; and small Abby had learned how to sew. Their mother was their teacher, and they were apt pupils. Abigail loved to set the small, waistcoated lad—a pretty lad, though they did say he was just like his mother!—down on a tortoise-shaped stool to read to her and her daughter as they worked industriously at their lacework, or on shirts for big John, or on petticoats or sheets or caps. She was teaching Johnny history, assiduously, and, through him, Abby, also. It was mostly history that she bade him read to them—from a well-thumbed "Rollins' Ancient History" of

her own—and he read with gusto, enjoying it and his small importance.

He took himself very seriously already, this small Johnny Quincy. Abigail told him how greatly his papa desired that he should apply himself to his letters, and his numbers, and all those simple studies which she was at pains, out of her own memory of days at Grandmother Quincy's knee, to instil into him. And he surely did not want in the least to disappoint this kind, lovely mother, who treated him and sister Abby as though they were as grown-up as she. She had never made a baby of him. Always she reasoned with him, making him feel, even at seven years old, his responsibility in the household.

But it was not all lessons, or all work, either. There was singing, and a little dancing, and Abigail was teaching herself the French language out of a pronouncing book, so that she could give them a knowledge of it later. And there were games she knew, and would always find some corner of time to play with them. Or she would set them to play by themselves, her work made easier for their laughter.

And sometimes John would send them all over to Weymouth, to Grandmother Smith's, for a few days' visiting. And then, while Abigail and Grandmother and Aunt Elizabeth—or Betsey, as they called her—gossiped as though they would never get into the few days all they had to tell each other, Grandfather, that smiling parson, would play with the little ones, and tell them tales, and feed them goodies, and spoil them. He hated to see them go. And sometimes Mary Cranch would bring her own family of small ones from Salem to swell the party, and brother Tom might be present, with his wife and children—and then the parting was ten times harder!

The succulent meats that graced that groaning table—the veal and the mutton and the fowl! The fish that came out of the harbor waters! And doubtless they would joke about the tea stains in those waters—joking the merrier for the fact that the elders, at least,

feared already, darkly, a stain that was more sinister than tea.

For trouble must come of it all. Abigail's beating heart was finding an echo in the hearts of all her sisters, were they American patriots or British Loyalists.

Trouble, indeed, was once again in Boston waters. General Gage, an envoy of Lord North, had come to take command of the troops on Castle Island, just beyond Dorchester across the bay; and to look over, incidentally, the situation on the mainland. . . .

The people of Boston received him well enough. For aught they knew as yet, he might be one of them. The sponsors of the Colonial side of the argument were by no means all on this side of the water.

General Gage was not long in disabusing their minds. Perhaps it was true, as some said, that dust was thrown in his eyes, and he was carefully kept out of the way of those who might really enlighten him. At any rate, he stayed only long enough to throw a handful of dust likewise in patriot eyes while he looked the situation over in his own way, and by the light of his own ambition. And after that he did not care, for he had sailed once more for England, with his report.

"They will be lions while we are lambs, sire. But, if we take the resolute part, they will prove very meek, I promise you."

George III was no weakling. When an ambitious mother, at the time of his youthful accession, had whispered in his ear, "George, be a *real* king!" he had interpreted the advice in his own way. He had surrounded himself with a party of men who, in exchange for royal smiles, would be amenable to royal policy. Or, slily ambitious, like Saville and Burgoyne, would seek subtly to dictate it, but remain satellites withal. After that necessary precaution, Pitt and Fox and their fellows might argue and rave—but they talked to Tories who, far from representing the people of the country, represented, in the main, groups of people who no longed existed —"rotten boroughs" that had passed away, but whose voting privileges remained like active ghosts to haunt and taunt more modern, thriving, but officially non-existent communities.

Representatives of the press might protest at being cleared from the House before debates. Barré might thunder that Americans had been driven to colonize by religious oppression, and had earned the freedom of the country they had built themselves. Barrington, who stood as the Minister for America, might plead for the rights of the country he was supposed to administer, and deprecate a clash with it; but it served no purpose. The King made up Parliament's mind. . . . And the newspapers were told no more than was harmless.

The King's Majesty, therefore, would act on General Gage's report.

This Colony of the Massachusetts was obviously the hotbed of insurrection; this town of Boston the core. Very well—the town and the port of Boston must be closed, and rid of its self-important councils. If necessary, the Colony's royal charter would be rescinded.

Lord North was a little fearful.

Should they not wait—or send a pair of frigates to subdue the few uprisers? Was it wise to take such strong action, now?

Wise? Action? Against—whom? Was a parcel of farmers and shopkeepers to dictate to the King?

So when Abigail went forth from her house in Queen Street with one or other of her "little brood"—to carry a letter to the post; or to purchase a newspaper; or to shop at the narrow-windowed stores; or to attend divine service and forget her anxieties for a brief hour; or to gossip fearfully with an erstwhile friend whose sentiments, of a certainty, she could not always fathom, she would feel the Boston air full laden with oppression.

General Gage—they knew him now!—had come back Governor Gage, plenipotentiary, replacing the beaten Hutchinson.

And from town walls pregnant with dread there shouted out the current proclamations of a monarchy that had no love for "rebels."

Boston, poor Boston, must suffer. Those pregnant walls shouted to Abby that Boston was no longer a port of the sea.

Boston was barred from the sea. Nothing must pass.

"You can put Boston seventeen miles from the ocean!" the sycophants were whispering to the King. "You can show these haggling Colonials what you think of their petty trade quarrels!"

And lo! Boston was pushed, not merely the seventeen miles from authorized landings and commerce, but almost out of existence altogether.

By sea she was harried, and by land, too.

On May twenty-sixth of that year of horror, which was 1774, John, in the confidence of the General Court, could inform Abigail that Governor Gage had issued a significant order. From the first of June onward, the Governor had informed the state legislature, it would sit, not at Boston as heretofore, but at Salem.

John Adams had acted as moderator at a mass meeting in Faneuil Hall for the purpose of protesting against the Boston Port Bill and the other recent acts of the Crown.

It had been no feeble protest. He had seen it grow from shock to anger, from patience to impatience and wrath.

And now Abigail might gather, from certain hints and signs, that when the Court did meet at Salem, there would be surprises for the new Governor among others.

CHAPTER VII

RESOLUTION

ABIGAIL was suffering both physically and mentally at this time. She had fallen sick of a painful fever, that was to visit her at intervals throughout her life. Yet her courage rallied and grew—and she stood in need of courage, for she was facing, not only their reduced circumstances arising from the mandatory clos-

ing of the town, but also a new and ominous parting from her husband.

The Governor's instructions to the House, that it meet henceforth at Salem, had not been interpreted quite in the spirit in which they had been meant.

The House, true, was meeting obediently at Salem instead of at Boston as heretofore; but—it was meeting behind doors locked against his Majesty's viceroy.

Riders sped to Boston, to tell the Governor.

Riders sped back to Salem, and banged on the doors of the temporary Chamber, shouting the Governor's urgent order for a dissolution.

The House dissolved—after passing a resolution that was the most momentous that the House had ever considered.

The House had duly "considered the unhappy differences which had long subsisted, and were increasing, between Great Britain and the American Colonies, and had resolved that a meeting of Committees from the several Colonies should be called, to study the present and the possible future effects on the Colonies of certain Acts of Parliament, and to decide in concert what was to be done for the recovery of their just rights and liberties, civil and religious, and the restoration of that union and harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies that was most desired by all good men."

The Committees would meet in the City of Philadelphia, if deemed generally suitable, on the first of September. The Committees of Correspondence, which Sam Adams had organized for adequate communication of reports and instructions, and which Virginia was using also for inter-colonial exchanges of views, would play their part in the preliminaries, and the Speaker of the Massachusetts House would notify the Speakers of the Houses of Burgesses or Representatives in the sister Colonies of the substance of the resolutions, and obtain their agreement.

The Massachusetts delegates to this first momentous congress of the resistant Colonies were duly chosen:

James Bowdoin, Thomas Cushing, Samuel Adams, Robert Treat Paine, and John Adams.

It meant, if he accepted—and he never thought of refusing—that John had given himself, for better or worse, to his country; that his country had taken him into her definite service. And once again misgiving warred with gratification in him. He did not court public life—he rather recoiled from it; but if he entered it, and he must, now, he wished to know that public confidence in him was no greater than his own ability to justify that confidence.

And there were subjects nearer home yet to discuss. Living in Boston grew more and more expensive—more and more of a problem. Nothing in a financial way was developing for him; or could develop, for there was no prospect of business for anybody in the paralyzed town.

They must retrench, economize—narrow down their already modest household. They might have calls to contribute very largely, in proportion to their circumstances, to the support of others even less fortunate than they.

But he was not in the dumps; he assured Abigail of that, in his serious, rather pompous way. And neither must she be. Well, she was not—so long as he was with her.

They decided at length, however, to move yet another time, back to the farm. And when this was an accomplished fact, and they had closed up the Boston house and left it to the fates, and taken their little ones home, peace was theirs for a brief further period.

John must ride off on his circuit, as formerly. But it would be the last time.

He wrote to her from this final professional tour—letters of the kind to which she had grown accustomed, yet with a difference.

"Let us, therefore, my dear partner," he wrote, "from that affection which we feel for our lovely babes, apply ourselves, by every way we can, to the cultivation of our farm. Let frugality and industry be our virtues, if they are not of any others. And above all cares of this life, let our ardent anxiety be

to mould the minds and manners of our children. Let us teach them not only to do virtuously, but to excel. To excel, they must be taught to be steady, active, and industrious."

Well, she would teach them; she would guide them, while John went out to help his country. She would run the farm, as he had always done, with all her might. She would live for her babies and for him—and, like him, for America.

It was for the women, now, to show they could play a new part in adaptation to new conditions; to show, also, that the huge-looming new conditions failed to terrify them. For Abigail, as for her friend Mercy Warren, whose pen, proving virile and enheartening, was already busy in the way of patriotic authorship, it was woman's opportunity to emerge from the background and set her shoulder beside her man's.

CHAPTER VIII

ADVENTURE

NOT a boat, not a scow, was allowed in the harbor waters. Not a head of live stock, not a bale of hay, might pass across from the islands whence the farmers' stocks had been used to come. No builders' materials, no storekeeper's wares, must enter that way. Nothing could cross by the Charlestown ferry.

Those red-clad troops on the Common saw to all this, and were glad enough of the occupation.

Food began to be treasured where it had been prodigally enjoyed. No longer did three or four differing viands grace the board at the same meal. One, or, at the most, two joints of meat must suffice the well-to-do; none, or scraps, augmented with stinted vegetables, the less-fortunate.

But the neighbors did stand by Boston, hurrying to her aid with

all they could spare, and, more, didn't mind dodging the redcoats, or sacrificing appearances, either.

Colonel Putnam, the friend and fellow-soldier of Doctor Warren, came striding into town one morning, driving before him, on the ribbon of road, a flock of fat sheep. A novel sight to see in conjunction with military dignity! Lambs for denuded Boston dinner-tables—and the gallant Colonel had driven them in himself. What a welcome he received! The townsfolk crowded round him, beat him on the back, shook his hand till it was numb, and well-nigh smothered him with gratitude, so that Doctor Joseph had to rescue him and carry him off for needed rest and refreshment.

The neighbors must not forget Boston.

And Braintree was a neighbor, also.

Boston—poor Boston—was in Abigail's mind always, after she had left it. What she could spare, she gave, gladly; what she could make with her hands, she made, and gave also.

But she herself must conserve. For the exigencies of the day had blockaded her own livelihood, save for what she could gather, by determination and good leadership, from her own fields and pastures.

In former days the happiest hour for Abigail and the children had been that which brought John back from his circuit-riding. She would have them all waiting for him—the dainty, rather frail-looking little Abby, doubtless in her stiffest skirts and highest heels; the handsome, serious Johnny Quincy; the ruddy-faced Charles; the baby, Thomas. She would have the meal cooking in the pot that hung by its hooks from the iron swinging crane above the logs—meat and turnips and a green vegetable, perhaps; or a wild goose on the spit; and a fragrant pudding doing to a turn in the capacious brick oven, which she had warmed with a fire of its own and tempered down to an even heat.

If it was evening, there would be lighted candles everywhere—in lamps and in sticks—plenty of candles to light John home, even

if she had to do some extra tallow-mixing and wick-setting with her girls for the occasion.

And John would enter, and gaze at his family and his home till none could doubt how glad he was to be back again; and babies who could talk would ask questions of him—childish questions: "What have you brought for me?"—that universal acquisitive query of the child; and deeper questions: "Papa—what of the soldiers? What did the Governor do, Papa? Papa, are there big ships in the harbor?"

But this time John's homecoming was not such a joyous occasion. For he must leave again, forthwith, on a journey fraught with dangers beyond the many dangers which already beset ordinary journeys. And there might be, for all they could hope to the contrary, nothing but contumely, at best, at the end of it.

Still they made the most of reunion. They shut out parting, though they could not shut out current affairs. Those were too real, too personal, too omnipresent for every Colonist now, man, woman or child.

He begged her to be calm, to rid her mind of disquietude; and she would try, for his sake.

But he must promise likewise. She wished him to go away hopeful. She wished him to enjoy his journey and to feel easy concerning them all. The babies would keep her amused. She would guard them, and guide them in all the ways he bade her. It would keep her occupied—and they were charming companions.

They tarried together once more, when and while they could, and toured the barns and the barley-rows, the cornfields and the orchards, the dairy and the outhouses, making plans. And they walked once more together, and prayed once more together on Sundays; and visitors came—the family; the Warrens from Plymouth;* that other Warren—the hard-working patriot Doctor Joseph, from Boston. Friends and neighbors came from here or

*It was James Warren who, in the House's meeting at Salem, had urged John Adams' appointment to the Congress.

there—erstwhile critics, even, and erstwhile belittlers. No man now belittled the four * who would ride to the Congress. All came to wish Mr. Adams good fortune—and success.

The day was here. It seemed to have come with lightning speed, as all such evil days do come.

They said good-bye at Braintree, inside the farmhouse door, with the children clustering round them. Presently she would ride to town with him, and with everyone of Boston's patriots would watch him and Sam Adams, and Cushing, the former Speaker of the House, and Robert Treat Paine, the young Boston lawyer, mount into an argosy destined to sail uncharted seas.

The coach for Philadelphia!

The puny feet of the child Independence were faintly kicking.

But for the moment, at least, parting loomed as large for Abigail as the purpose for which he was leaving her.

CHAPTER IX

PREPARATION

THE great distance between us makes the time appear very long to me. It seems already a month since you left me. The great anxiety I feel for my country, for you, and for our family, renders the day tedious and the night unpleasant. The rocks and quicksands appear upon every side. What course you can or will take is all wrapped in the bosom of futurity. Uncertainty and expectation leave the mind great scope. Did ever any kingdom or state regain its liberty when once it was invaded, without bloodshed? I cannot think of it without horror. Yet we are told, that all the misfortunes of Sparta were occasioned by their too great solicitude for present tranquillity, and, from an excessive love of peace, they neglected the means of making it sure and lasting. They ought to have reflected, says Polybius, that, 'as there is nothing more desirable or advantageous than peace, when founded in justice and honor, so there is nothing more shameful, and at the same time more perni-

* Bowdoin had refused.

cious, when attained by bad measures, and purchased at the price of liberty.' I have received a most charming letter from our friend Mrs. Warren. She desires me to tell you, that her best wishes attend you through your journey, both as a friend and a patriot,—hopes you will have no uncommon difficulties to surmount, or hostile movements to impede you,—but, if the Locrians should interrupt you, she hopes that you will beware, that no future annals may say you chose an ambitious Philip for your leader, who subverted the noble order of the American Amphictyons, and built up a monarchy on the ruins of the happy institution. . . .

"We have had a charming rain, which lasted twelve hours, and has greatly revived the dying fruits of the earth.

"I want much to hear from you. I long impatiently to have you upon the stage of action. The first of September, or the month of September, perhaps, may be of as much importance to Great Britain, as the Ides of March were to Caesar. I wish you every public, as well as private blessing, and that wisdom which is profitable both for instruction and edification, to conduct you in this difficult day. The little flock remember papa, and kindly wish to see him; so does your most affectionate

"ABIGAIL ADAMS."

She longed to hear . . . but five endless weeks passed before she had a letter; and meanwhile she must be content to learn from the newspapers that the delegates were arrived; and she must put off the many who came seeking news from one who would be best posted.

But it came at last.

They had given him and his fellows a great send-off, he told her. A number of patriot friends had prepared for them a farewell feast at Coolidge's hostelry, on the road from Boston, and sped them later with inspiring speech and admirable and friendly assurances.

At every town they had met with honor and acclaim. Crowds had thronged the streets as they came; guns fired a salute; church bells pealed; and the feasting had been almost overwhelming. The leading citizens of each place had received them. At their inn, society would call on them. And there was no doubting the balance of sentiment along the countryside.

She could gather that it pleased him—and that he took it, not for himself, or his friends, but for his Province; a gesture of sympathy toward harassed Boston.

He felt, characteristically, worried at his own deficiencies, however, and his doubts grew, the nearer he approached Philadelphia and this "nursery of American statesmen." He felt himself wanting, not only in a sufficient knowledge of the colonies, but of the kingdom, and of commercial affairs, and of political law also. He wondered whether the result of this meeting would be an annual Congress of Committees—and what they would accomplish—whether they would petition, and whom; what their recommendations would be, the result of their deliberations. . . . At times, he told her, he felt terribly depressed. Did America possess men capable of dealing with such a situation? Had she men of sufficient genius, or education, or knowledge of the world through travel, or financial means? All would be needed, and wisdom and fortitude beyond all.

But his own shortcomings worried him the most. He was yet to realize in what good stead his long years of participation in town meetings thronged with hard-headed, shrewd New Englanders were to stand him. Affairs of state were not so new to him as he believed. His Massachusetts meetings had given him self-possession, ready wit, and steadiness of purpose in debate; and the topics of their little debates, though domestic in great degree, had ever concerned, largely, the natural rights of man.

There were many riding to Philadelphia that day who were less equipped than he—less versed through legal practice in preparing an argument, less hardened by neighborly dissension and dissection to sustaining it.

And he was consumed by a desire to do his best, though the further he got from home, the further he penetrated into new and wider surroundings, the more he was oppressed by a sense of the responsibility he shared.

His nerve was good, though, and his courage never higher.

Yet, thus early, there had showed a necessity for a tactful bearing. Friends had come to warn them that a certain feeling would not be absent as they rode further afield. Massachusetts had the name for an overweening pride. It was rather expected that the Massachusetts gentlemen would take on a superior attitude, and constitute themselves the arbiters. There were religious prejudices, political prejudices, the natural prejudices aroused by a feeling of equal rights, to contend with.

In New York they had met with pointed allusions—hints that any lead-grabbing, or application of any traditional New England principles, would meet the coldest opposition.

John reported the New Yorkers rather ill-mannered, rather loud, rather unreceptive. . . .

But there was worse yet.

As they rode into Philadelphia itself, a party of the Philadelphia "Sons of Liberty" had come out to meet them.

"You have been represented in this town," they informed the quartette, "as four desperate adventurers. 'T is said that John Adams and Paine are but two young lawyers, of no great talents, reputation, or weight, but seeking to raise themselves into consequence by courting popularity. Moreover, gentlemen, you are suspected in these circles of having independence in view. Do not utter the word. If you do, you will be undone. Independence is as unpopular in Pennsylvania and in all the middle and southern states as the stamp act itself."

If it did not dismay them, it had put them on their guard. Samuel and John would curb their tongues. Paine and Hancock would hold back with them, at least until they had destroyed the prejudice against the Massachusetts. . . .

Abigail filled her days to the utmost—tutoring her children, working with her maidservants, supervising the farm work, cooking and baking and weaving. John was anxious that the little ones should grow up, not only honest and intelligent, but cultured and accom-

John Adams

FROM THE PORTRAIT BY COPLEY

plished also. At his request she started them on the simple lessons in French, and watched that their music and dancing did not suffer under the weight of more solid learning; and saw that their play was in just proportion.

There was trouble on the farm. Not the overburdening trouble that the farmers of Boston were suffering, but perplexity enough. It was summer, and exceedingly warm—and there had been no rain for many days. Produce had been falling off because of the drought. Abigail's cows were not giving their proper quota. And—what was almost as bad—the daily passages from cool dairy to hot oven-side, through air that was like an oven itself, enervated her almost beyond support.

But she refused to complain. If John was safe; if the Province need not suffer so bitterly, she would, indeed, be as satisfied as might be with her lot.

She did not always know that John was safe. He wrote to her as often as he could. He had told her that, despite anxiety for the Province, things looked hopeful. He begged her to be prudent, cautious.

"Remember," he wrote, "my tender love to little Abby; tell her she must write me a letter and inclose it in the next you send. I am charmed with your amusement with our little Johnny. Tell him I am glad to hear he is so good a boy as to read to his mamma for her entertainment, and to keep himself out of the company of rude children. Tell him I hope to hear a good account of his accidence and nomenclature when I return. . . ."

Johnny was to go to Mr. Thaxter, a former pupil of Mr. Adams', and an erudite man. There the boy would learn his Latin and his preparatory lessons. Most of John's letters bore witness to the fact that his children's future, as well as their present safety, still occupied no small part of his mind.

But sometimes there were no letters. Sometimes for weeks she must worry, unappeased. For mail-riders were slow, and might not even reach their destination. And there was work and there were

social obligations to fill a committeeman's time—or much of it—in Philadelphia.

Full days in Philadelphia—and boundless agitation everywhere, even in little Braintree, which sometimes had slept through crises less momentous. Even Braintree could not sleep now.

Rumors flew, if news did not; but news of Boston was not lacking at the farmhouse.

Another traitor! they told her. Boston seethes with traitors, till we know not whom to trust. Colonel Brattle, Boston born and bred, had plotted with Gage. He had given Gage advice, by a letter which had come to Dr. Warren's hands, to break every commissioned officer of the Province, and seize the Province's and the town's gunpowder!

Abigail was aghast at such news, all too frequent now. But Colonel Brattle! As much of the soil as Brattle Square, or Brattle Street Church, or Boston herself! Why should Colonel Brattle plot against Boston?

Boston could know no peace. The plot bore evil fruit, and swift, and seemed to have set the Governor off on sinister trend. He had his men mount cannon on Beacon Hill, and on the Neck, that narrow strip of land at the south of the town, that joined it to Roxbury. A full regiment was encamped there, and there, too, the redcoats had begun to dig entrenchments, and to throw up breastworks.

It was like a match to the fire of the townsfolks' alarm. The selectmen waited on the Governor, and voiced the town's protest. The Province, in congress of patriots, sent a further committee to inquire of the Governor what the preparations meant.

The answer came.

Abigail heard it as the alarm it propagated spread like a contagious disease.

Charlestown had been visited by order of General Gage, and all the powder in storage there had been removed.

* * * * * * * *

There were wagons, trundling past the house. Mrs. Adams sent a glance to the high-road outside, through the open kitchen window.

There must be two hundred men—passing solemnly, quietly but with purpose.

She guessed where they were going.

Down to the powder-house in Braintree town.

They passed from her sight; but presently she heard them coming again. Now the carts, that had been empty before, were loaded, moving carefully.

She went to her window and leaned from it as they passed. Solemn-faced men, they would be, in worsted stockings and home-made suits; not speaking; but one or two of them looked up, and saw Mr. Adams' wife at the farmhouse window.

"Do you want any powder, Ma'am?" If they smiled at her, their smiles were grim.

Abigail shook her head.

"No, sirs—since I know it is in so good hands!"

"We must take it out of the parish," they told her. "For truth, there are so many Tories here, we dare not trust this parish with it!"

And Gage should not remove it while patriots had the chance!

It was true, about the Tories—though they had the grace to hide their heads. Feeling in Braintree now was very high. John had written to her that the people should retrench, and prepare for warlike measures if they proved necessary, but avoid them as long as was possible. She felt, from her own observations, which she did not fail to report to her husband, that Braintree, at least, would soon be in arms, if it came to it. And meanwhile a Tory parson was praying for his Majesty on Sundays, and hiding his head on weekdays—and some even said he had run up garret at a rumor of patriot wrath, while others hid among their corn and said their prayers.

The patriots harried them. Even the crown officers found it increasingly difficult to do their duty. Sheriff Vinton, with a bunch of jury summonses, was followed and surrounded. If Britain could

close the courts when patriots impeded commerce, patriots would act likewise when Britain did so, as she was doing now. There would be no royal courts of justice until this thing was settled. The people surrounded the court houses, and the men of Braintree were surrounding Sheriff Vinton as he tried to serve his jury summonses.

"What shall we do with them, men? Shall we burn them?"

They put it to the vote—a circle of countrymen with solemn Puritan faces; and then, the "ayes" predominating, they took Vinton's bundle of papers from him and threw them to the ground and set light to them.

They watched the bonfire till it was nought but ashes. Then:

"Let us huzza, friends!"

But some of them shuffled.

"'Tis Sunday, Thomas——"

"Ay, Tom—the Sabbath is no day for huzzaing."

"What say we put it to the vote also?"

They did.

But the Sabbath was no day for giving huzzas for a bonfire—even a royal bonfire.

The vote passed in the negative, says Abigail in a letter to John.

Vinton had to swear, however, before they would let him go, that he would handle no more jury summonses.

As for the Tory parson,

"I could not join today," wrote Mrs. Adams, "in the petition of our worthy pastor for a reconciliation between our no longer parent, but tyrant state and these colonies. Let us separate. They are not worthy to be our brethren. Let us renounce them, and instead of supplications, as formerly, for their prosperity and happiness, let us beseech the Almighty to blast their counsels and bring to naught all their devices."

A far cry, this, from a girlhood passed in a peaceful Weymouth parsonage—a girlhood sweet with loyalty to an honored English king!

CHAPTER X

PROCRASTINATION

THE wide radius of the Quincy circle, with its aura of family devotion, was to prove grateful now to Abigail. Her parents, her sisters and brother and her more remote relatives, as well as her friends, sought all in their power to relieve her loneliness. At Colonel Quincy's, near the waterfront, one day, she dined in company with Mrs. Samuel Quincy and Mr. and Mrs. Josiah.

"A little clashing of parties, you may be sure," she wrote to John of this—though Mrs. Samuel, at least, was no ardent Royalist like her husband. Indeed, "she thought it high time for her husband to turn about; he had not done half so cleverly since he left her advice."

Homecoming, however, with perhaps a looked-for letter, was sweeter.

> "Upon my return tonight, Mr. Thaxter met me at the door with your letter, dated at Princeton, New Jersey. It really gave me such a flow of spirits that I was not composed enough to sleep until one o'clock. . . ."

Congress still hoped, these letters told her—or a majority of the members hoped—for a just independence under the old régime; and for guarantees which would make an independent allegiance possible. . . .

John Adams and his fellows had, indeed, surprised by their moderation. It was the gentlemen from the South who were impetuous—young Rutledge and Mr. Pendleton, the rustic-looking Patrick Henry; and the wealthy planter, slave-owner and soldier, George Washington, who had distinguished himself so signally in the late war.

But one who understood the forthright Adams as well as Abigail did could gather that he chafed, even while good sense approved caution for the time. There was so much drinking and feasting between distinguished gentlemen, come together from the several colonies to thrash the situation out. So little real work done, or even to be done, for they possessed no express authority.

They had formed a great committee—two members from each province—for the purpose of drafting a bill of rights. John and Samuel represented their state on this, and were active in the drafting. But secretly John fumed when even the "impetuous" Virginia gentlemen held back from too free assertion. He was finding it increasingly hard to curb his impatience at the little accomplished by this Congress, in which his hopes had been so high as he first regarded the gathering of men of fortune, ability, learning, eloquence and general acuteness—the pick of the Colonies.

But if the first Congress did not accomplish too much—and that might have had grave consequences in itself—it did not err when it accomplished too little; for at least it whet the people's appetites, and set them calling for more.

And it accomplished this much: It introduced the Colonies to each other, and made them friends, and made their fortunes intermingle.

And that was enough.

If the cry was yet "Stand still, bear with patience; if you come to a rupture with the troops all is lost!" it was at least a calm-headed cry.

But John Adams felt that the issue was submission or resistance, and marking time was irksome to him. His own Province was suffering, at that very moment, under the iron heel. And they bade him "Be patient. Forbear!" Not for long could he hold himself back.

Yet when rumor came to the Congress that Boston was bombarded—a false rumor, it proved—resentment flamed immediately,

and the cry was for war. In Massachusetts was placed, for the moment, at least, beyond doubt, the sympathy of the entire country. The grave and peace-loving old Quakers of Pennsylvania and the warm-blooded men from the South united with the East when it actually came to open British aggression. But—what was aggression? They did not want to be the aggressors. . . .

For John Adams, these deliberations spun out interminably. All the wit and sense and acuteness seemed to overflow sometimes, and clog the machinery. That good Pennsylvanian by adoption, Doctor Franklin, honored and famed for his writings and his almanacs and his homely philosophy, had too many followers for his temperate philosophy now, and they were by no means all among his Pennsylvania compatriots in the Congress.

Meanwhile, nothing was being done. And the enemy was at the gates.

Revere, the silversmith, was riding the post—riding his speedy horses from Boston to Philadelphia and back again. And Abigail, who had become "Portia" once more, watched for Revere and lived for his coming. She watched at one end of the ride, and John watched at the other, seizing loving messages with avidity. For him, "Portia's" letters had a double value. They were cheerful and devoted—and they were also in the nature of a finger on the pulse of that sick patient, Massachusetts Bay. He could trust Abigail; be thankful for her keen, observant mind; and show her letters with confidence to his circle of intimates in the Congress, as she showed his to neighbors who flocked for news.

She was watching Boston as "Portia"—and as Abigail, the mother, she was watching over his children and guarding them with a purity more stern for his absence and the troubled times.

"I have always thought it of very great importance," she wrote, "that children should, in the early part of life, be unaccustomed to such examples as would tend to corrupt the purity of their words and actions, that they may chill with horror at the sound of an oath, and blush with indignation at an obscene expression. These first principles, which grow with their growth,

and strengthen with their strength, neither time nor custom can totally eradicate."

And in her next,

"You will receive letters from two who are as earnest to write to papa as if the welfare of a kingdom depended upon it."

When they came, they showed the tremendous youthful effort, and showed, too, that Abigail's little ones were not disappointing her high ideals for them. John could stifle regret that his growing sons lacked a father's care.

"Sir,"—wrote Johnny Quincy to his father at the Continental Congress, "I have been trying ever since you went away to learn to write you a letter. I shall make poor work of it; but, sir, mamma says you will accept my endeavors, and that my duty to you may be expressed in poor writing as well as good. I hope I grow a better boy, and that you will have no occasion to be ashamed of me when you return. Mr. Thaxter says I learn my books well. He is a very good master. I read my books to mamma. We all long to see you. I am, sir, your dutiful son,

"JOHN QUINCY ADAMS."

And the little, maidenly screeds that his special pet, daughter Abby, was writing to him, served to increase his gratitude for the balm Abigail's babies were to her in her loneliness.

Only for them, though, did his unceasing cry of "Frugality, economy, parsimony" make Abigail afraid. Yet she would not let him see her fears. She tried to make her own letters as hopeful, encouraging and lighthearted as possible.

"My cows," she scribbled, in the midst of the dreadful drought, "—my poor cows will certainly prefer a petition to you, setting forth their grievances and informing you that they have been deprived of their ancient privileges, whereby they are become great sufferers, and desiring that they may be restored to them. More especially as their living, by reason of the drought, is all taken from them, and their property which they hold elsewhere is

decaying, they humbly pray that you would consider them, lest hunger should break through stone walls. . . ."

But cutting down—spreading her rations to the fullest extent, so that neither babies nor maidservants nor Brackett, the trusted man, who liked his nip of rum, nor the rest of the help should feel the want—was, in reality, no joke.

Want was stalking all too close. Her brother Tom was domiciled in Boston, and sometimes her father would carry her there, if only for the diversion. Secretly Abigail felt immeasurably depressed on these occasions, and was glad to go back to her farmhouse. Boston was no longer the friendly town she had known. It was like a corpse, a departed friend, to her, now. But a friend, dear Heaven, who had but "put off present glory to rise finally to a more happy state." In Boston she had to strive with all her might not to despair; but to trust in the cause of her country and in the men who prosecuted that cause.

Her country had taken warning. Her country, hoping against hope yet for peace, was preparing for war. . . .

In Braintree the broadsides were out, warning all men above fifteen and under sixty to come to arms. All men between those ages were already in training. And Abigail knew a younger—a seven-year-old—who burned to take up arms, too!

And yet these men who were training under arms to fight against England, shackled as they were by far-flung bonds, were freer men at that moment than the men of England itself. The men of England were beginning to realize it. The Whigs in the British Parliament were becoming more and more importunate with their pleas for parliamentary reform and for local self-government in the large towns of Britain, that were now, with the villages, tied hand and foot by every edict from the throne.

The Whigs did not hate the Colonists. The Whigs did not hesitate to encourage them, or conceal the fact that they were so doing. For the Colonists were fighting, not only for liberty for themselves,

but for Englishmen's liberty and for liberty for British Colonies in the future. On the present dispute the future rested, more universally than they dreamed of.

Farseeing statesmen knew that a defeat of the Colonies of America would not bring peace, or prosperity either, to the British nation.

"If America falls," said William Pitt in the British House of Parliament, "she will fall like a strong man. She will embrace the pillars of the state and pull down the Constitution with her."

But George III knew, at least, what he was fighting for. He was fighting for autocracy against democracy. To Hell with the British Whigs, and to Hell with the patriots of America! Seize this Samuel Adams and this John Hancock, who started the row with their Sons of Liberty, and send them over here to me. I will deal with them, and it will be their finish, I promise you!

The Boston papers did not miss any of it. Seize Sam Adams and Hancock!

Where *were* Sam Adams and Hancock?

Nobody knew. No one, that is, could tell Mr. Gage.

For the Continental Congress had disbanded, closing its deliberations with nothing more than a certain resolution. Sam Adams and Hancock had come home to Boston with the others. But where they had disappeared to after that, it seemed no one could inform Mr. Gage.

Abigail was amused, but aloofly.

John was home.

CHAPTER XI

CONFLAGRATION

HE was home—happy beyond words to be there; hoping, indeed, and believing, too, that he might never have to leave it any more—but dissatisfied with the feeble results of a convention

that had augured so hopefully. The Continental Congress had achieved nothing more in the way of concrete result than the putting through of its bill of rights and the sending home of its delegates with a more or less strong recommendation to their several colonies for a resolution of non-intercourse with the mother-country.

This John knew to be mistaken, of itself, though he had not yet put his finger on its essential weakness. Doubting, he had voted for non-exportation, but not for non-importation, ere he realized that this was a half-way measure that could never work financially. But the whole scheme was unpopular. To the traders it seemed like baring the flesh to invite the knife, or, indeed, starting the incision voluntarily; for by it, as things stood, they could gain nothing and might lose their last chance to fortify themselves materially. More, on the way home John had seen that New York, at least, received the non-intercourse recommendation so illy that the Tories of that section of the country had bounded to triumph, and to a hope of carrying their whole Province.

It was not a successful termination of the Congress, nor did it prove timely. The only sentiment of satisfaction that fluttered in John Adams' breast was gladness that he was on his farm. "A frock and trousers, a hoe and a spade," cried he, and he would be contented for the rest of his days.

He had happy memories of Philadelphia socially. The people had been hospitable, and had made the lot of the delegates as smooth and as comfortable and as little tedious as could be in every way. Indeed, it seemed now, looking back, to have been a constant feasting, and a daily round of drinking that ill suited his particular temperament. He had formed many friendships, however, and had issued many invitations. And now he could consider his journey to that "far country," which took so very many days to reach, as a rare adventure and a seeing of the world which it was not likely that he would be called upon to repeat in the localized existence to which he had always been accustomed, and probably always would be.

He was content. This humble homestead, ever a haven of rest and relaxation and sympathy and love, was all of the world that he craved.

He found changes, however, even here. Little Abby had grown more serious, more intent on helping her mother and on nestling under her mother's wing; Johnny, a swift-growing lad, had grown valiant, too, comprehending much, asking information on what he did not comprehend. John could talk to him like a man—of events at Philadelphia, and events at home and abroad, linking them, guessing at the future. The child was accustomed to it. He had become his mother's close confidant, and knew her as John did—as both Johns were always to do. She had read him all her letters and he had remembered them, and talked of them with her, and tried to figure out in his little mind, that was being judiciously fed on the history and the literature of the past, that he was actually a part of some wonderful history that was being made now. He was excited about it, and in his childish breast patriotism was already aglow.

"Some of the negro slaves in Boston tried to betray the people," he told his father, gravely. "They wrote to the Governor and told him they would fight for him if he would give them arms and promise to liberate them if he was successful. Even now, they say he is considering it. My mamma said——"

"What, my son?" Abigail had told John, in a letter, of the conspiracy, and he knew her views well enough, but he was enchanted to get the child's reactions to them.

"My mamma said she wished most sincerely there was not a slave in the province."

"And why, John? Why did she wish it?" We can see him drawing the little plain-dressed figure to him, and caressing the boy's smooth cheek.

"Because, sir, she says we are fighting ourselves for what we are daily robbing and plundering from those who have as good a right to freedom as we have."

"And you, my little Johnny—do you think so too?"

"Yes, sir,"—simply. And then, with a quaint valor, "I do not wish men to be slaves when I am free."

The three of them, the man and the woman and the prematurely wise little boy, talked of the past, of the present, and of the future. But of the future they talked with rather bated breaths.

Abigail's heart must have contracted in her breast when Johnny talked of freedom. The colonies had elected—or the majority of them—to make a stand for their liberties. But that liberty so long enjoyed seemed terribly remote now, tangled up in the snarls of internal—or international—dissension that might lead no one knew where.

She was grateful for her manifold duties—and for the fact that, at present, anyway, they might be carried on without the added burden of anxiety that parting from John meant. She was schooling herself in thrift and husbandry as she was schooling the children in knowledge—and in patriotism. Thrift was needed. None knew where the country was going. And as for the law——

"All law ceases," said Abigail. "And the gospel will soon follow, for they are supporters of each other."

But there was ample occupation for everyone who sought it. The Continental Congress had at least provided for adequate temporary local government in each of the provinces. Mr. Adams found himself nominated immediately, as a member from Braintree, to the Massachusetts Congress, which was of necessity the best equipped for watching Governor Gage—and for preparing. That good Mason, Doctor Joseph Warren of Boston, was splitting his time holding meetings, training men in his capacity as a commanding officer in the Boston regiment, and presiding as Speaker over this Massachusetts Congress, with Sam Adams as well as John, John Hancock, and James Warren, of Plymouth, among those aiding him in his activities.

It was at this time that John Adams wrote his famous "Novanglus" letters. Draper's paper, the Boston *News-Letter,* was

running a series of pro-Tory epistles from one "Massachusettensis." * "These papers," John Adams recalled, many years after, "were well written, abounded with wit, discovered good information, and were conducted with a subtlety of art and address wonderfully calculated to keep up the spirits of their party, to depress ours, to spread intimidation, and to make proselytes among those whose principles and judgment give way to their fears; and these compose at least one-third of mankind." As the letters increased in number, Mr. Adams' anxiety as to their possible effect increased also. He waited in vain for a patriot with the time and the wit to answer them, and at length took the duty upon himself.

The letters of "Novanglus," which appeared originally in the Boston *Gazette,* were destined to be reprinted time and again, on both sides of the water. Today they stand as one of the monuments to Mr. Adams' erudition, to his patriotism, and to his grasp of current affairs.

"In New England," he writes, "they had the effect of an antidote to the poison of Massachusettensis, and the Battle of Lexington, on the 19th of April, changed the instruments of warfare from the pen to the sword."

From the pen to the sword! But the sword can write, too, in letters of fate on the wall of destiny. . . .

On the nineteenth of April, Paul Revere, who had so often forsaken his silversmith's shop to carry letters for patriots—who had ridden the post from Boston to the Congress at Philadelphia, from John Adams to his lonely wife on the farm—rode his galloping horse to Lexington, and up over the cobble-stones to the guarded house where Sam Adams and Hancock were lodged.

"Less noise there—ho!" the citizen guard cried. "Less noise there —you, post!"

Revere shouted that they'd soon have noise enough. "The regulars are coming!"

* Later investigation established Judge Daniel Leonard, a friend of Mr. Adams' earlier days, but an ardent Tory in the Revolution, as the author of the letters of "Massachusettensis."

And Lexington awakened, bells ringing, citizens hurrying, two, on whose head a price was set, removing once again.

Gage had wagered, before he sailed from England, that the rebels had only to be given a show of force and they would "run from one side of the continent to the other." The lesson of Lexington and of Concord, and of the weary road to Boston again, enlightened him.

Only eight in all, redcoats and "Yankees," fell, to rise no more, in that first battle on the village green at Lexington. The world, counting the cost, might have deemed it a small casualty list; but all that the world heard, as it chanced, was the echo of the shots. Those, the whole world heard, and was shaken by their thunder from its wonted grooves into new currents and new inspirations.

By the bridge at Concord the muskets had roared once more. But once more it had been no battle.

Then high and low in Concord, in public buildings and private, in fields and cellars, the British had hunted for the patriots' powder. They had not found it. The two men they sought, of course, were also out of reach by now—though Revere, whom they had surprised with Dawes, his fellow messenger, was a prisoner.

Finally, then, with their prisoner Revere, they had begun the weary way back to Boston.

But by the time they reached Boston they had lost their prisoner, and more besides. The way had proved wearier than they had thought.

Every hedge, every fence, every wall and every tree had harbored a patriot band. Every band bore muskets, loaded. The British had to fight every inch of the way, and fight they did, with all their resources and their numbers.

But Revere's warning work had been too well done. At Cambridge the British were surrounded. The already many-times-reinforced patriot bands had been overwhelmingly added to here. Worn out and depleted in ranks, the redcoats had yielded, with

seventy-three dead, twenty-six missing, and one hundred and seventy-four of their number wounded by the way.

* * * * * * * *

Revere could carry the post once more, and the papers—the news. Thrilling news!

New England was rising. From every corner of the Massachusetts; from Connecticut and Rhode Island; from New Hampshire; militiamen were mustering—some of them new to battle, many of them bearing the scars of French or Indian War.

But all of them, unmistakably, eager to carry on that which had been begun.

CHAPTER XII

PARTINGS

THERE was plenty of information flashing along the road and up Penn's Hill to the west of the farmhouse. John had been despatching expresses into town since early morning, and the replies to these were constantly being supplemented by passers-by on other missions.

They were pouring into the town, it was said—scores of them every hour—men from all over the Province, recruits for the army, militiamen, civilians, minute-men. And more were to come. The word had passed through all New England!

But the word would pass beyond New England now.

"It is not only these provinces that must answer now," John told Abigail. "The moment is here. Now is the time for that unity which has waited on a crisis such as this. The colonies must link now with each other, stand together in a mass devotion, or fall, each one by itself. But they will join. This cause is not the cause of invaded Boston, or ravaged Massachusetts, alone. The colonies will rally to each other."

Again men came marching along the road before the house—tired men, but determined. Abigail knew them—armed men, dusty and worn. The minute-men of Braintree, ready many hours to follow those who had run along the road to Concord, on the far side of Boston from here.

Abigail, with her own man and her children around her, saw the leader emerge, and pull off his hat.

"Ma'am, if you please. We are gathering the ladies' pewter spoons—such as can be spared."

She did not need to be told what that meant. Pewter spoons! For what other purpose could they be so urgently needed than for melting? For bullets!

Abigail went to her kitchen, and from the chest of drawers beyond the big table, she took her spoons, leaving, doubtless, in her zeal, few more than one apiece. She gathered them in her hands, and ran to the door.

And when she turned away again, she was weeping. With all her fortitude—and she was to have need of much—a moment such as this could move her to tears. With all her shrewd grasp of current affairs, those affairs could often overwhelm her.

There were fresh partings ahead. A new Congress was called, and would meet on the tenth of the following month, at Philadelphia, as before, to seek the means and the methods for united action.

At Cambridge, on the road to Lexington, the Provincial Army of New England had assembled, under the joint command of Generals Joseph Warren, Ward and Heath. John Adams rode there before his departure for the Congress, to meet his friends the Generals, to view for himself the state of the troops, and to learn at first hand, from soldier and potential recruit, the story of Lexington and Concord.

The road to Lexington was not encouraging. What he met was mostly confusion, and want. The patriot army needed muskets,

cannon, and besides these, clothes and food. But there was no lack of resolution.

All were ready, all eager, for what might come.

Heartened by their ardor, but suffering, already, for them in their imminent distresses, he rode on to Lexington, along the battle-road. From the dwellers along the way he heard the story of the fight. From them, as well, he gathered that there could be no more lulling of the people of this province, at least; no more putting off of the issue.

His concern, and his own patriotism, mounted as he rode—as he marked the growing signs. He felt, indeed, unable to support the agitation that filled him by the time he reached his house again.

"The die is cast," he told his wife. "The Rubicon is passed. My Lord Mansfield has said in Parliament that if we do not defend ourselves, they will kill us. We will defend ourselves. The hour has struck."

He was not himself in the morning. All night he had tossed on the great square canopied bed, unable to sleep any more than Abigail, beside him, could really have been sleeping. For parting was upon them.

He rose with cheeks and eyes and head burning; and Abigail rose, too, in alarm.

He must not go—he could not ride today! He was in a fever. His hands and his brow were burning! He had taken some sickness.

He assured her it was nothing, hiding from her his own alarm. He was—roused—by what he saw yesterday. That was all. It would pass.

But she was not tranquil.

She begged him to wait until it had passed. He could not ride, fevered as he was.

Very well—he would not ride. He would go in the sulky, with the man Bass to attend him. But he must go.

She knew, for she had suffered fever too often herself not to

know, how his head must be aching. She knew what an effort it was for him to hold it up as he was doing, fighting himself. But she did not argue further, for she knew him also. His conscience would not quail before a mere fever!

So he rode away from her again, his head not as heavy, in truth, as his heart. The echo of the shots at Lexington had not died away. Battle madness was rising. What might there be in the near future for the women and children around and about Boston? . . .

In February Parliament had declared the Colony of the Massachusetts to be in a state of rebellion. Boston was already ground beneath a military heel. Patriots were targets for the arrows of contumely and hardship. And what of the wives and the children of patriots, left alone?

"In case of real danger, of which you cannot fail to have previous intimations, fly to the woods with our children!"

Savages still lurked in those woodlands to the rear. Animals that could and would attack a human. Unknown terrors.

But the terrors that John feared for Abigail in the open seemed to him worse than these.

CHAPTER XIII

ALARM

THE rigors of Boston were now, indeed, those of siege. Even those living as near by as Mrs. Adams could glean little news, for scarcely anyone was allowed to leave. And when they were allowed, it was hardly better, for no one knew what of their effects they might take with them. Some had to leave behind their household belongings, their clothing and their hoards. But many were

kept beleaguered, despite their pleas. And everyone suspected of complicity in those acts which had defied the Crown, such as the destruction of the tea, was sentenced, with his goods, to like destruction.

It was almost as bad for those who dwelt outside. Abigail had forgotten when she had last known a peaceful moment. She went to bed at night filled with deepest dread; she awoke, if she slept at all, with a jarring start of fear.

Yet strive to sleep she must, for much depended on her. The house must run on as usual—or nearly as usual. Johnny must go to Mr. Thaxter's—as long as Mr. Thaxter remained a civilian and a teacher. The farm work must proceed. Abby must help with the spinning and the soap-making and with little household chores. The small trio must have their lessons, whatever passed, because John wished it, and she as much. Plenty for everyone to do, and everyone did it with a will; even the smallest, Tommy.

The days were certainly full enough to have shut out terror and pain. There were guests in the house, now, all the time—eating, sleeping, seeking help in every way; refugees from the town of Boston; soldiers, coming in for food and drink where they knew they would not be refused. It was a beleaguered city in little—a house of upheavals where peace and orderliness had always reigned.

Some nights she slept—and soundly—even if but for a brief spell; often through sheer weariness and pain.

Sometimes she dozed off, after a night of chasing thoughts, as morning dawned.

She was sleeping on a Sunday, when, as it was nearing six o'clock, they came to tell her that the drums were beating, and the guns had fired—three times. It was the alarm! Weymouth bell was ringing as she dressed in haste, and other bells took up the warning.

Three sloops and a cutter, it seemed, had come out and dropped anchor just below Great Hill, by Germantown and Weymouth. The rumor was that three hundred redcoats were preparing to land.

And Germantown and Weymouth citizens were in flight, driven from their homes, frantic. Abigail's father, she heard, had fled; her mother; their household.

Dr. Tufts was frantic. The ailing Aunt Tufts had had her bed thrown into a cart, and had got into it herself and had herself driven to Bridgewater.

The neighborhood echoed with something very like panic.

But here were the patriots, with their black cockades! Here was the little American army, flocking by, muskets loaded, visages grim! Little, but no mere handful against outrageous odds this time. Were they not two thousand strong? Ready for three hundred British redcoats, at any rate!

It seemed, however, that the British had no more fell design, for the moment, than to seize Farmer Levett's supply of hay, which lay on Grape Island across the bay. A safe enough expedition, for where were the rebels' boats? Crippled, and under the eye of those which were punishing Boston.

Not all! The redcoats didn't get much of the hay. Firing-pieces, waiting on the coast for just such contingencies, raked them as they worked at their shifting and lading. Meanwhile, Hingham found a boat; and Germantown found one; and manned and armed them also.

Three tons of hay, only, went to fill the redcoats' stables. For the rest—there was a pretty bonfire on Grape Island that morning!

But there was no rest for Abigail now. Her house was upon the high road, and a haven well-tried for those from Boston and from the sea. Ever since the alarm from Great Hill had sounded, the stream of refugees had grown in numbers until now it was threatening to become an avalanche. She gave them food, and drink and lodging. Sometimes a whole week's lodging must be given to a whole family in flight from siege and alarm and calumny; for they could not go back, and many of them had fled without thought for a place to go to.

She cared for them. In her own bedchamber were strange

babies' cribs; the children's rooms were like small dormitories, crowded beyond health, but what could be done? In the kitchen, people slept; in the outhouses; even in the fields, at last. In the barn were soldiers, with whom Johnny proudly fraternized, learning their drill from them. And all day long Patty and Sue, the maids, were running to and fro with food on platters, food in baskets for departing guests, fresh steaming food for new-comers. All day long the rum-barrels were busy. All day long the milk that Abigail drew from her cows was being poured for the babies and the mothers. All day long, in spite of everything, the loom must work, and the wheel, for clothes were needed badly.

Her uncle Quincy, whose mansion lay near the water, had sought refuge with her on the alarm from Great Hill. His daughters, too—all except the lovely Dorothy, who had gone to her lover, John Hancock, while he lay hiding at Lexington, and married him soon after. All Abigail's relatives, and she herself also, had secured for themselves a possible retreat with one or other friend whose house lay more secure, in case of danger. It was thus they had to live.

She longed for John's presence, but could be half glad that he was away from this tangible distress. And yet, in spite of herself, she felt, she wrote him, that loved ones should be near when danger threatened.

Danger hovered close. The seacoast seemed to vibrate with it, as a barrel of powder before the carelessly-flung match. The seacoast seemed to shrink, to put up a sheltering arm to shield itself from that which menaced it.

It was sweltering weather already. Massachusetts sweltered or froze, it seemed, with little equity between. It was summer. Round the farmhouse door, and round that of old Mrs. Adams' house also, sat open-coated men—nervous citizens of Boston, talking low with men in unaccustomed, blue and buff uniforms. They talked to Abigail, too, bringing her news of Boston, though none to hearten her.

There were redcoats everywhere—even in the Old South Church.

It was a house of worship in no sense any longer, but a common riding-school for the British.

"God's house and cottage, mansion and school—they are ravaging them all," said a former neighbor of Abigail's. "Your house, ma'am, in Queen Street is deserted, but some official will spy it, and will not spare it, neither."

This was disturbing in a different way. John had bade her, if she could, have his valuable books removed to a safer place before it was too late. But she had hesitated, for two of John's young pupils, Mr. Hill and Mr. Williams, had stayed on in Boston, and the library had been their refuge, so that she had hated to remove it from them.

Well, it was too late for repining—on personal matters at least.

It was rumored that Gage now had eight thousand in his army. They were drilling night and day, and landing arms and powder.

Abigail's answering inquiry was obvious. What of the patriots? They were drilling also? They were preparing?

Preparing—yes. They were doing that, and swiftly and well enough. But—the powder houses were emptying fast, and if the patriots lacked powder they lacked the means of war. Knox, though, had vowed to get powder for them. He had, indeed, said he would get powder if he had to ride to the other end of the country for it.

Abigail knew the stout young Knox from his apprentice days in Daniel Henchman's bookstore near the Old Brick Church. Knox had been a soldier since he was eighteen. He was lieutenant in the grenadiers of the Boston Regiment, and proud of his company and its good name. In Henchman's store he had always been reading war books, and as Henchman's assistant he had sold reading matter to British officers and enjoyed their patronage in days gone by. He it was who had pleaded with Preston in the moment of the massacre. He had made one of the band of "Indians" at the brewing of the tea in Boston harbor. Abigail had heard much of Knox of late.

"They say his wife had his war sword in the lining of her cloak when they fled from Boston," a soldier told her. "They say she is settled on a farm near the lines at Cambridge, and vows she will go through all with him."

Abigail could envy Mistress Knox—envy her even the dangers which the vow implied; for dangers shared thus, she felt, could not hold the terrors of solitary imaginings.

Solitary imaginings, however, if they were to be her lot, must be crowded out. There was work to do—plenty of work. There was more than enough to occupy her brain. The pinch was beginning, in unmistakable ways, though not yet humanly vital ones, to be felt ominously. Supplies were not so easy to obtain as they were in peace time—as they had been last week, even. Flax she could still get, as much as she wanted; and wool. She had laid in an enormous supply, for her weaving and her spinning, now, were mostly for the needy. But everyone wanted spinning tools. Pins were scarce. A bundle that had used to cost her seven shillings odd now was priced at twenty, when obtainable. She begged John to get her pins in Philadelphia, and told him to pay whatever he must for them, and send them to her, for she must have them.

Pins! How long before it would be food, and even a roof for their heads? How long before the seacoast, as they hourly expected, was attacked, and she and her little family must fly?

But the British fleet, at the moment, was otherwise engaged. The British fleet was watching Bunker Hill.

CHAPTER XIV

WAR!

SOMETHING was happening on Bunker Hill.

Something usually was happening these days, at any point the redcoats chose to scrutinize from their penned-in city. For the

"rebels" had turned the tables. If Gage could keep patriots from leaving Boston town, the patriots were now in a position to imprison him likewise. And they had not hesitated to do so.

New England had rallied. Two scores of thousands stood around Boston, and penned the Governor in on all three sides that were not the sea. If the Governor wanted to leave by way of the sea, he could still do so. The sea was now his sole refuge and his sole aid, though a powerful one enough. His reinforcements could come no other way. The people would see to that. Loyalists could approach Boston from the land at the risk of their necks. There was no entry there.

In the harbor, though, the British flotilla lay, and watched the hillsides, and gave safe-conduct to those recruits whose coming did not fail to strike terror in hearts where terror had been. There is no war till swords are crossed; no bloodshed till the bullets fly; but the blood can chill and the mind take fire at the sound of marching feet.

"Thousands more British have come," the post-rider told Abigail, "the Generals Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne with them. Burgoyne, they say, has sworn that he will drive the 'peasants' from about the town, and make elbow-room for his soldiers."

Could he do it? Were they prepared to stop him?

There were plans, she heard—but not much more than that. They said the patriots were intrenching, and the men needed but little drill. But there was a lack of powder, and of arms, too.

"It will come," said Abigail. "When the other colonies come to our aid, as come they will, for it is their cause also, there will be powder enough to drive the redcoats home."

But she did not feel, perhaps, as strongly as she spoke. When the man had ridden off she took herself indoors and sat down to write to John—invariable solace in time of lonely stress. . . .

Her brain would not come to it, this time. She set pen to paper, but the pen would not write. More redcoats in Boston! And but little ammunition for those who would keep them imprisoned

there, or drive them out to sea! It terrified her. Her mind was beaten, attacked on the one hand by these new anxieties; on the other by an older one.

Once again she had not heard a word from John for five whole weeks.

Was he well? Was he safe, in that far-off town that was to the untraveled woman a whole world away?

She wanted to fly to him—to weave for herself, she said, some magic pair of wings that would cut the weeks-long journey down to an hour, and take her there forthwith. Philadelphia! Scene of a council that could only be a council of war!

Once more two missives came together, creating reaction almost worse than the strain before. But the letters told her much, and what she sought and found first was the news that he was well.

The colonies, he said, were drawing closer together with each succeeding session; there was no doubting that the country was in earnest. . . .

There had been relief and regret waiting for him in Philadephia. It was discernible at the first meetings of the inter-colonial delegates in the Congress Hall that Boston's afflictions were unmistakably the common bond of sympathy. Furthermore, Dr. Franklin had been on a mission to England, where he had always enjoyed a warm welcome. He had been requested to judge of the position of affairs there, and had recently returned with his report—a report not so reassuring as he had hoped it would be. . . . It was a story of politics and interests, trade and ambition, fighting a winning fight against disinterested friendship. He had done his share of friendly prompting, but he doubted.

His doubt and his deductions, however, had won Boston, and the cause, many new supporters; thrown into discredit some who would decry the patriot stand; cast out many prudent hesitations.

But Abigail was thinking, racked once again, that the letters were, after all, nine days old, and more. What was happening to the country meanwhile? What was happening to John?

At least, however, she could be calm enough to pen a letter to him now:

"I sat down to write to you on Monday, but really could not compose myself sufficiently; the anxiety I suffered from not hearing one syllable from you for more than five weeks, and the new distress arising from the arrival of recruits, agitated me more than I have been since the never-to-be-forgotten 14th [19th?] of April.

"I have been much revived by receiving two letters from you last night; one by the servant of your friend, and the other by the gentleman you mention, though they both went to Cambridge, and I have not seen them. I hope to send this, as a return to you.

"I feared much for your health, when you went away. I must entreat you to be as careful as you can consistently with the duty you owe your country. That consideration, alone, prevailed with me to consent to your departure, in a time so perilous and so hazardous to your family, and with a body so infirm as to require the tenderest care and nursing. I wish you may be supported and divinely assisted in this most important crisis, when the fate of empires depends upon your wisdom and conduct. I greatly rejoice to hear of your union and determination to stand by us.

"We cannot but consider the great distance you are from us as a very great misfortune, when our critical situation renders it necessary to hear from you every week, and will be more and more so, as difficulties arise. We now expect our seacoasts ravaged; perhaps the very next letter I write will inform you, that I am driven away from our yet quiet cottage. Necessity will oblige Gage to take some desperate steps. We are told for truth, that he is now eight thousand strong. We live in continual expectation of alarms. Courage, I know we have in abundance,—conduct, I hope we shall not want; but powder,—where shall we get a sufficient supply? I wish we may not fail there. Every town is filled with the distressed inhabitants of Boston. Our house among others is deserted, and by this time, like enough, made use of as a barrack. . . .

"Pray be as particular as possible when you write. Everybody wants to hear and to know what is doing, and what may be communicated do not fail to inform me of. All our friends desire to be kindly remembered to you. Gage's proclamation you will receive by this conveyance. All the records of time cannot produce a blacker page. Satan, when driven from the regions of bliss, exhibited not more malice. Surely the father of lies is superseded. Yet we think it the best proclamation he could have issued.

"I shall, whenever I can, receive and entertain, in the best manner I am

capable, the gentlemen who have so generously proffered their services in our army. Government is wanted in the army and elsewhere. We see the want of it more from so large a body being together, than when each individual was employed in his own domestic circle. My best regards attend every man you esteem. You will make my compliments to Mr. Mifflin and lady. I do not now wonder at the regard the ladies express for a soldier. Every man who wears a cockade appears of double the importance he used to do, and I feel a respect for the lowest subaltern in the army. You tell me you know not when you shall see me. I never trust myself long with the terrors which sometimes intrude themselves upon me.

"I hope we shall see each other again, and rejoice together in happier days; the little ones are well, and send duty to papa. Don't fail of letting me hear from you by every opportunity. Every line is like a precious relic of the saints. . . .

"I am, with the tenderest regard,

"Your
"PORTIA."

One of the gentlemen from Philadelphia would call; would talk to her; would take a letter back to John.

She envied him that last.

On Bunker Hill—or on Breed's, rather, its twin and neighbor—between the two rivers called Mystic and Charles, and hard by Charlestown Neck, there were spades at work on the night of June sixteenth, 1775.

From midnight till dawn they dug and piled and made firm, amid low-spoken orders, anxious reconnoitrings and murmured snatches of martial song. It was a torrid night. The men had shed their coats, and some their shoes and stockings, also, but they sweated in their haste.

On a knoll stood the officers, Prescott, commanding the soldiers here, Warren, and Greene, Knox and a half-dozen others. If they could carry out their work, they would command Boston and drive the redcoats out. They would be seen at dawn, they knew—if, indeed, they had not been spotted already. Would Gage delay, conferring; or would he act at once? Would he see the necessity

for promptitude, and save himself? It was hardly to be hoped that he would not.

At four Gage knew.

At four-thirty, he called his officers in council—Howe, Clinton, Burgoyne, Percy, Grant. They met in the Province House, the ancient dwelling of the Royal Governors, a four-square mansion with a turret and a weather-vane, that stood in its own grounds off Marlborough Street.

This alarm had done more than bring officers from their posts. It had turned courtiers back into soldiers, a popular playwright into a respected General. There had been a showing in Faneuil Hall, last evening, of General Burgoyne's latest play. For Burgoyne was a social and dramatic lion, as well as a military leader. The Tories and the British had been making the best of a bad business all winter and spring, and a gay social life, albeit a sadly artificial one, had sprung up and flourished in Boston.

But war will not wait on the lesser drama. Burgoyne had doubtless forgotten the plaudits of the night before as he sat, long-faced and immaculate, with General Gage at dawn. Howe, and Clinton, and my Lord Percy had put their social engagements behind them. . . .

Gage issued his orders. Howe would lead the attack; Clinton and Burgoyne would direct the fire from Copp's Hill; Percy would support Howe. . . .

At noon, the British crossed; three thousand strong, fording the river for three long hours.

But in less than that time, Boston sprang to life.

On every roof, in towers and churches, at every vantage point the people crowded, patriots and Tories, civilians and soldiers also—for Boston might not be left unguarded. . . .

Thus, from the rooftops, Boston watched the British crossing the river.

And from the rooftops on the other side, Charlestown tried, valiantly, to prevent their landing. From the houses, roofs and

streets of Charlestown, men, and women, too, were firing on the redcoats as they approached.

At Copp's Hill, where the batteries were, observant, Clinton issued a sharp order.

"When our men are through, fire—fire on Charlestown. 'T is an armed camp, and must be disabled."

It did not take long. The boom of discharge; the fall of a shell; another; and another; and houses were burning. Charlestown was burning, slowly, slowly; then not so slowly. . . .

And the redcoats were marching on, their bayonets fixed, their arms ready, while from the waters of the harbor, from the waters of the Charles and from those of the Mystic; from the waters that surrounded Bunker Hill, the British naval fire began. The British had the management. The Americans' judgment, alas, had been sadly lacking. There were less than a thousand Americans to guard the earthworks; less than two hundred feet actually intrenched. And powder, as ever, was wanting.

In Braintree, in a house at the foot of Penn's Hill, Abigail Adams heard the thunder of the opening bombardment.

Johnny Quincy came to her, breathless, round-eyed, and seizing his hand suddenly, she ran out with him into the shimmering heat of the hilly road.

Up the hill they ran together, and at the top, stood staring, at a panorama so stupendous that it stunned them.*

Heat—a wavering haze of it. Smoke—from the flaming city of Charlestown, on the shore beyond Boston. Smoke wafted ever so little by the tiniest northeast breeze. And above all, the broiling summer's day.

The redcoats, like insidious flames themselves, were crawling, crawling, up that far hill. Flames, to scorch and wither her people!

Below, the harbor waters, and, between Boston and Charles-

* A cairn, erected by the Adams Chapter of Quincy, Daughters of the American Revolution, now stands on the hilltop, where Abigail and her little son stood watching the fires of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

town, the mouth of Charles River, running high. On the waters' expanse, the row-galleys, with shirted men crouching.

And the thunder of guns—cracking the silence between. Boston! The Copp's Hill guns were bellowing death to the rebels; the ships poured fire and fury on them.

The breeze was wafting the smoke—blowing it into the faces of the blue-and-gray men in the trenches on the hilltop that frowned down on Boston.

The flames of Charlestown mounted higher. . . . Abigail's father had been born in Charlestown. . . . He loved each stone of it. She could picture his anguish when he knew that Charlestown was no more. . . .

And the haze and heat grew ever more intense.

The living flames on the far hillside were creeping higher, too; and higher.

The little line of trenches spat death! The Americans were fighting. . . .

Abigail could hear the volleys, and feel them, as if they tore out her own vitals.

It was war, and death in battle, that she was looking on with her little son.

We can picture the child beside her gasping, red-faced and white by turn. But she would not be able to answer his frightened questions. Her hand at her breast, she would be watching the harmless-looking puffs of smoke that went back into the earthworks—her earthworks; and her ears, a moment later, would be roaring with the volley.

How many of Prescott's brave men? And who? How many patriots had already paid the price?

There were redcoats lying on the hillside—flames that had died, or that merely smoldered now. But the scarlet tide before them had swept on and up.

Crash!

Another patriot volley. She could almost visualize the hand of

death, descending anew, on brother and brother; for their blood was the same as it mingled.

The far hillside was bleeding with redcoats. The trenches, whose depths she could not fathom, began to seethe with a final wild activity.

The red line stopped; huddled a little; went on. Gage would not give up Boston at the loss of a few hundred lives. Gage knew—what Abigail knew, what the British Generals down there must know—that patriot powder must be running low.

How long would it hold out?

They were over—they had met—as she stood there in anguish, Johnny beside her.

And presently neither seemed to breathe, for it had grown so still!

From the long, sloping road behind her came a rider, covered in dust, and horror, and hate.

"The Doctor, ma'am! Oh, ma'am! He is gone! Warren is killed —outright—they bade me tell you——"

All his life John Quincy Adams remembered how his mother broke, kneeling on the grass amid the balloonings of her skirts; crying broken-heartedly for the loss of a neighbor, a friend, and a leader—a man who had believed that the colonies should be free. . . .

The bewildered child comforted her, tried to caress her. The rider, descending, doubtless spoke words of regret for his clumsy blurting of the news.

But she was up. Had the firing ceased, or did her mind simply refuse to take in any more? . . . The beloved Doctor—gone! . . .

The shooting had ceased. The battle was over. The blue and the buff and the black cockades had retired; the ships were slowly moving back to their moorings. And the British still held Boston.

But the brave, kindly Warren, and the men who had fallen beside him! *Their* work was over.

CHAPTER XV

LEADERSHIP

MRS. ADAMS' letters to her husband at this period show perhaps more clearly than any others her depth of feeling and her capacity for the most intense emotion. Warren, their friend and their prop, was gone, and a hundred brave men with him.

The news fell on John, in Philadelphia, like a blight, speeding there as fast as the swiftest horse could carry it. There were many to weep. Bunker Hill was lost, but trenches could be built again. The greater loss was Warren, and the men who had died with him. Not many. There had not been many there. . . . Not so many as the British lost. The Americans had lost less than a hundred; the British, more than a thousand.

"I wish we could sell them another hill at the same price," vowed General Nathanael Greene; but, remembering Warren, he wished it no more.

And it was not alone for the purely personal reason that John and many others deplored the loss.

Brave—yes; the patriots had held themselves bravely. Thus far, Warren was vindicated. But the conduct of war was less simple than the patriots of Bunker Hill had thought. They had lacked skill, finesse, foresight. The reinforcements that had been relied on from Cambridge, in the rear, had been—where, when the trenches fell? Nearer Cambridge than Charlestown, alas! And the British armed ship *Glasgow* had been sweeping Charlestown neck, which the reinforcements must pass if they came, throughout the battle. It was perhaps as well that they had not ventured. . . .

Moreover, the fires of Bunker Hill had set fire to some, at least, of the hopeful conceptions of the second Continental Congress, and reduced them to ashes.

The sword had fallen, and cut the colonies adrift. Cut them from Britain.

It was too late for peace; but if the patriots around Boston had been unprepared for real warfare, there were some, at least, in Congress who had foreseen it.

On June seventeenth, at the very moment when the cannon were roaring at Bunker Hill, John had written to his wife, in elation and with fervor:

"I can now inform you that the Congress have made choice of the modest and virtuous, the amiable, generous, and brave George Washington, esquire, to be general of the American army. This appointment will have a great effect in cementing and securing the union of these colonies. . . . I hope the people of our province will treat the general with all that confidence and affection, that politeness and respect, which is due to one of the most important characters in the world. The liberties of America depend upon him in a great degree."

It was not until later, however, that Abigail was to learn that the appointment of Colonel Washington had been a personal triumph for John Adams.

On his way to this second Congress, Mr. Adams had discovered that the whole face of things had changed. New York, which must be the key to any project of invasion, far from being swept by the Tories, as had been prophesied, was showing most unmistakably patriot; the Jerseys bristled with determination and preparedness; North Carolina, Connecticut, were obviously clearing decks for action. And in Philadelphia, that Quaker stronghold, were actually soldiers! Three complete American battalions—two thousand men of artillery, foot, and cavalry. It was then that John wrote dashingly to Abigail,

"We shall see better times yet! The military spirit which runs through the continent is truly amazing."

Nor was he himself immune to it.

"I have bought some military books, and intend to buy more. . . . Oh, that I were a soldier! I will be. . . . Everyone must, and will, and shall be a soldier."

But there was war enough, and fighting enough, and danger enough, to come for John Adams.

His other discovery had been that the antagonism toward New England in the Congress had centered, not in the entire delegation, but in himself. The moderates had labeled him "Dangerous."

Thus, hostile circumstance, at the very start, made John Adams the leader of the Independent party—made of him, combined with his own ability in conflict and his own determination, a "Colossus," even to men like his new-made friend and co-worker for liberty—Thomas Jefferson of Virginia.

The Congress split up inevitably, into factions—Independents, and Conciliationists. At the head of the latter was Dickinson, a much-lauded local Pennsylvanian, who, it was said, had entered the Congress against the protests of his womenfolks, and amid his mother's wailings that he would be hanged; that his estate would be forfeited; that his wife would soon be a widow and his children beggarly orphans. . . . John could be thankful for his Abigail; and for that stalwart old lady, his own mother, who was as staunch as she. At least, he said thankfully, he did not have to fear a "rear attack!"

The rear attack certainly handicapped Dickinson. The latter hesitated. He shied at a breaking off. He insisted on another extension of the olive-branch—a new humble petition to the King for a peaceable guarantee.

The debate that followed had engaged all parties; but in its course John Adams' fiery disgust with this temporizing had carried him into the most vehement oratory. "Powder, and artillery," he had cried, "are the most efficacious, sure, and infallible conciliatory measures we can adopt."

After it was over, and Dickinson had won the first bout, and

the resolution was passed by a majority to send the new petition to the King, the two men met outside, and spoke together—hot words, though John believed that he was cool compared with the usually cool, aristocratic and dignified Dickinson. And after that they spoke no more with each other—in private at least.

But throughout his life Adams was to blame Dickinson and his new petition for the loss of Warren at Bunker Hill and for the fact that confidence in the Continental Congress was yet further delayed by a false hope of peace, preventing the raising and equipment of adequate troops at this time.

John continued to work for his aims—for his province and his country—and to din those aims into the ears of Congress. He believed that the Crown officers should be held as hostages for the security of the people of Boston, to be released only when Boston was released. He believed—and above all things—that the colonies should be declared free, sovereign and independent states, empowered to inform Great Britain that all negotiations for the redress of grievances and a restoration of harmony would be made upon that basis—a permanent basis. He believed it would be salutary to inform Great Britain that America would not hesitate to seek alliances with European powers if war should come. And he believed that the army at Cambridge, so pitifully inadequate and so devoid of government, should be adopted by the Congress, and that a general and other officers, pay, food, clothing, arms and munitions, should be found by the Congress.

In all these beliefs he was to be vindicated before many years had passed—but not before he had paid for them in spiritual and mental as well as physical anguish.

He did not reveal them all to the Congress at the same time, naturally. The hearts of some of the gentlemen would quite obviously not stand that. But he unburdened himself of them all, and in no uncertain fashion, as he deemed occasion suitable. And the adoption of the army, and its officering, he was determined to put through without delay.

Meanwhile, the Congress had at least voted to fortify New York, pending the reply of his Majesty—if any.

And now, having, with his fellow Massachusetts delegates, put through successfully a scheme of adequate self-government for his own State, Mr. Adams proceeded to enlarge and perfect his plans for the army. It must be the army of the whole, not of a part. New England soldiers had already received their baptism of fire, but Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the rest must stand by. The army could no longer be merely a Massachusetts army, as it was at present.

Now, John Adams was not the only one who was thinking about the army and its command. Indeed, there were several—and his own colleague and friend, John Hancock, the President of the second Congress, was among them—who thought about the command very personally. . . .

John Adams saw beyond them. His eye was resting on Colonel Washington, of Virginia, who was showing both his sentiments and his appreciation of the gravity of things by appearing at the sessions of Congress in uniform. If Washington should be chosen by the Congress to command the Continental army, it would be a gesture to the South and a favor to the North—for Washington had already proven his ability as a leader; and his appointment would mean union—a commitment to a truly continental army.

Mr. Adams thought he could answer for his own people. New Englanders were hard-headed, and would not be slow either to recognize a leader or to appreciate the political aspects of such an appointment.

For the rest—he decided to put it to the test. . . .

One morning (he writes in his Diary) as they entered the Congress Hall, he put his hand on Sam Adams' shoulder, and said, stoutly.

"Sam! I have resolved to take a step which shall compel our colleagues from Massachusetts and all the other delegates to declare themselves for or against *something*. I am determined this morning

to make a direct motion that Congress should adopt the army before Boston, and appoint Colonel Washington commander of it."

His kinsman looked up, struck; opened his mouth to say something; closed it again, and, after a moment, seized his arm and, with him, entered the Hall.

John did not keep him in suspense for long. As the day's proceedings opened, he obtained the floor.

"I wish," he said, standing, stocky and erect, full-wigged and correctly clad, before the patriots, weak and strong, there assembled—"I wish to make a motion that this Congress adopt the army now at Cambridge. I wish to move also that a certain gentleman be appointed to its command. This gentleman is a distinguished soldier from Virginia, who, in my belief, could unite the cordial exertions of all the colonies better than any other person."

There was a sensation; and in the midst of it, a certain military officer from Virginia, tall and pale and distinguished, rose from his seat in the Congress and hastened to refuge outside the Hall.

But there were others just as moved. It was a blow to the ambitions and the predilections of many—the greater blow because it was so eminently suitable a nomination, and because it had been launched on them without warning, at a moment when they were all saving their own nominations or aspirations or negatives for some remote occasion which might be judged more auspicious.

John Adams worked outside the Congress, however, as well as in. He managed to secure popular support for the motion; and at the same time to furnish refutation for the weak grounds of protest of the opposition. . . .

And he carried the day.

The formal vote for the appointment of Washington was proposed by Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, following the debates. The South had become, of habit, the tactful voice of the progressive party.

The result—Washington at the head; and ten companies of

riflemen to be sent from Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, to join the army before Boston.

"These are an excellent species of light infantry. They use a peculiar kind of musket, called a rifle. It has circular grooves within the barrel, and carries a ball with great exactness to great distances. They are the most accurate marksmen in the world.* . . .

"America is a great, unwieldy body. Its progress must be slow. It is like a large fleet sailing under convoy. The fleetest sailors must wait for the dullest and slowest. Like a coach and six, the swiftest horses must be slackened, and the slowest quickened, that all may keep an even pace. . . ."

But Bunker Hill had not waited. Bunker Hill had hardly heard of Washington as yet. Bunker Hill was lost and won as Washington was chosen. The muskets were roaring as John wrote his letter to Abigail, which sped to her, miraculously, in only seven days by horse. Seven days too long, though!

"Every line," she wrote, "from that far country is precious. O North, may the groans and cries of the injured and oppressed harrow up thy soul!"

Philadelphia was the "far country." She little knew to what further countries, to what further hazards, her man would have to fly at the call of patriotism!

* * * * * * * *

Washington was on the march. On the second of July, 1775, he came to Watertown, the place where the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts was now for months in session, with John's friend James Warren in the lamented Doctor Joseph's place as Speaker.

On the third, Washington took command of all the American troops.

Massachusetts had heard of him as a Virginia burgess, a well-to-do planter, a slave-holder. They knew him for an Anglican and

* Almost the exact words that Burgoyne was to use when he experienced their marksmanship later.

an aristocrat, and for a tried and proven warrior also. Massachusetts looked on the Virginian, astride his horse under the great tree on the Common, in his blue coat with the buff facings, buff small-clothes and richly-hilted sword, black-cockaded hat and epauletted shoulders. He was forty-three, and his campaigning experience and his gallant record showed in his soldierly bearing. His eyes were blue, his head nobly poised, his jaw firm. He looked a leader. And the perplexed Massachusetts patriots stood in need of just such a one.

Abigail met Washington, and Charles Lee, appointed second-in-command, a few days after their arrival. She knew Lee already by his writings—"a careless, hardy veteran," she found him, and proceeded to sum him up characteristically.

"The elegance of his pen," she wrote, "far exceeds that of his person."

But Washington! All they had said, all John had said, of Washington was true—indeed, she felt that they had not said enough.

"Dignity with ease and complacency, the gentleman and soldier, look agreeably blended in him. Modesty marks every line and feature of his face. Those lines of Dryden instantly occurred to me:

> 'Mark his majestic fabric! he's a temple
> Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;
> His soul's the deity that lodges there;
> Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.'"

She talked with Washington—of Philadelphia; of John; of the new Commander's army; of the past; and of the future.

It is recorded that Washington found the wife of the blunt John Adams a charming, finely-cultured lady, holding her country's sufferings and aims as close as did her husband. He was at pains to make known how pleased he was at the meeting.

CHAPTER XVI

A SLIP OF THE PEN

"TO Mrs. Abigail Adams, at Braintree, to the care of Colonel Warren, by Mr. Hichbourne.

"My dear,

"It is now almost three months since I left you; in every part of which, my anxiety about you and the children, as well as our country, has been extreme. The business I have had upon my mind has been as great and important as can be entrusted to man, and the difficulty and intricacy of it prodigious. When fifty or sixty men have a constitution to form for a great empire, at the same time that they have a country of fifteen hundred miles extent to fortify, millions to arm and train, a naval power to begin, an extensive commerce to regulate, numerous tribes of Indians to negotiate with, a standing army of twenty-seven thousand men to raise, pay, victual and officer, I really shall pity those fifty or sixty men.

"I must see you ere long. . . .

"Love to the children.

"J. A."

"P.S.—I wish I had given you a complete history, from the beginning to the end of the journey, of the behavior of my compatriots. No mortal tale can equal it. I will tell you in future, but you shall keep it secret. The fidgets, the whims, the caprice, the vanity, the superstition, the irritability of some of us is enough to——"

He finished there, and we need not doubt that he chuckled a little. He had thrown that much off his chest, at least, and was certain of her understanding and sympathy. But there was more. He would unburden his impatience, and his non-acquiescence in all the vacillations of the conciliationists, to his friend Warren and the Massachusetts Congress. They, also, could appreciate it.

So, to James Warren, John Adams wrote:

"Dear Sir,

"I am determined to write freely to you this time. A certain great fortune and piddling genius, whose fame has been trumpeted so loudly, has given a silly cast to our whole doings. We are between Hawk and Buzzard. We ought to have had in our hands, a month ago, the whole legislative, executive and judicial of the whole continent, and have completely modelled a constitution; to have raised a naval power and opened all our ports wide; to have arrested every friend of government on the continent and held them as hostages for the poor victims in Boston, and then opened the door as wide as possible for peace and reconciliation. After this, they might have petitioned, negotiated, addressed, &c., if they would. Is all this extravagant? Is it wild? Is it not the soundest policy? One piece of news, seven thousand pounds of powder arrived last night. We shall send you some of it as soon as we can, but you must be patient and frugal. We are lost in the extensiveness of our field of business. We have a continental treasury to establish, a paymaster to choose, and a committee of correspondence, or safety, or accounts, or something, I know not what, that has confounded us all this day. . . ."

Warren had recently written him that he had called on General Lee, and had been amazed and embarrassed by that gentleman's inordinate preoccupation with his many dogs, with which he surrounded himself, making much of them and presenting them to his visitors. But "Forgive the General a thousand whims," John bade him, "for the sake of his soldierly and scholarly qualities."

Daring letters, even though he knew to whom he wrote. Unguarded—for he knew not into whose hands the missives, and even the most trusted carrier of them, might fall.

A rider rode with them to Newport; took them on the ferry; and there was waylaid by agents of the British, and his letters taken from him. They went, not to Abigail, not to Warren; but to Admiral Graves of the British fleet, and later from him to Gage. And Gage, having read them exulting, sped them to London!

In London their arrival almost coincided with that of the latest renewing of the Colonists' petition to the King for a reconciliation. The letters were eagerly seized on as a sign of its insincerity. Even the friends of America in England, when they read them in the public sheets, looked on John Adams as a tactless person.

In occupied Boston, they created mirth. The British garrison adopted them in left-handed fashion, as food for the popular parody and pun and ribald jest.

"A Paraphrase upon the Second Epistle of John the Roundhead, to James, the Prolocutor of the Rump Parliament. Dear Devil——" began one such effort.

But all this was as nothing compared to the storm of contumely and the wave of ostracism that John Adams had to suffer when the letters came to the knowledge of the Congress. Had he not criticized the weak-strong majority; jibed, unmistakably, at the popular Dickinson; exposed one of the foremost officers of the patriot army, Lee, to the ridicule of the world?

Curiously, it was General Lee alone who rallied to him, in a deftly-phrased letter thanking Mr. Adams for the compliment on his "soldierly and scholarly qualities," and vowing that whenever he met a "biped" who compared in sagacity and intelligence and companionability with his dogs, he regarded him with every respect. He assured Mr. Adams in all sincerity that he thought him such a one!

But in Philadelphia John Adams walked alone—literally alone. Mentally alone, also, for the moment.

But time was to alter that.

CHAPTER XVII

EPIDEMIC

ABIGAIL continued to rely on her servants and her children and her never-ending stream of refugee guests for company; on the latter for news of suffering Boston. She grasped at such tidings as she could get of the city that was now in truth a garrison—a single huge fortress, besieged on three sides, oppressed

from above by martial laws. Did she hear that Mr. Rice the bookseller was laying up at her father's house, having succeeded, through the ruse of securing a pass from Gage to be abroad at nightfall on business, in slipping through the British guard and escaping; did she hear that Mr. Roulstone, the goldsmith, had managed to get out in one of the fishing schooners, and was now at a neighbor's homestead, she was there within the hour, plying the refugee with questions, anointing him with sympathy. For her heart was imprisoned with her friends in Boston.

She wrote to John of Boston—and of other things:

"Their beef is all spent; their malt and cider all gone. All the fresh provisions they can procure, they are obliged to give to the sick and wounded. Thirteen of our men who were in jail, and were wounded at the battle of Charlestown, were dead. No man dared now to be seen talking to his friend in the street. They were obliged to be within, every evening, at ten o'clock, according to martial law; nor could any inhabitant walk any street in town after that time, without a pass from Gage. He has ordered all the molasses to be distilled up into rum for the soldiers; taken away all licenses, and given out others, obliging to a forfeiture of ten pounds, if any rum is sold without written orders from the general. He gives much the same account" (She was writing of Roulstone the goldsmith) "of the killed and wounded we have from others. The spirit, he says, which prevails among the soldiers, is a spirit of malice and revenge; there is no true courage and bravery to be observed among them. Their duty is hard, always mounting guard with their packs at their backs, ready for an alarm, which they live in continual hazard of. Dr. Eliot is not on board a man-of-war, as has been reported, but perhaps was left in town, as the comfort and support of those who cannot escape. He was constantly with our prisoners. Messrs. Lovell and Leach, with others, are certainly in jail. A poor milch cow was last week killed in town, and sold for a shilling sterling per pound. The transports arrived last week from York, but every additional man adds to their distress."

She told him graphically of a patriot expedition to the Long Island, in Boston waters, to bring off, under the noses of the British men-of-war, some needed sheep and cattle—and some prisoners, incidentally, and some miserable women with them.

"As to the situation of the camps, our men are in general healthy, much more so at Roxbury than at Cambridge, and the camp is in vastly better order. General Thomas has the character of an excellent officer. His merit has certainly been overlooked, as modest merit generally is. I hear General Washington is much pleased with his conduct.

"Every article here in the West India way is very scarce and dear. In six weeks we shall not be able to purchase any article of the kind. I wish you would let Bass get me one pound of pepper, and two yards of black calamanco for shoes. I cannot wear leather if I go barefoot. Bass may make a fine profit if he lays in a stock for himself. You can hardly imagine how much we want many common small articles, which are not manufactured amongst ourselves; but we will have them in time; not one pin to be purchased for love or money. I wish you could convey me a thousand by any friend travelling this way. It is very provoking to have such a plenty so near us, but, Tantalus-like, not be able to touch. I should have been glad to have laid in a small stock of the West India articles; but I cannot get one copper; no person thinks of paying anything, and I do not choose to run in debt.

"We have not yet been much distressed for grain. Everything at present looks blooming. O that peace would once more extend her olive branch;

'This day be bread and peace my lot;
All else beneath the sun,
Thou knowest if best bestowed or not,
And let thy will be done.'

'But is the Almighty ever bound to please,
Build by my wish, or studious of my ease?
Shall I determine where his frowns shall fall,
And fence my grotto from the lot of all?
Prostrate, his sovereign wisdom I adore,
Intreat his mercy, but I dare no more.'

"I have now written you all I can collect from every quarter. 'T is fit for no eyes but yours, because you can make all necessary allowances. I cannot copy.

"There are yet in town three of the selectmen and some thousands of inhabitants, 't is said. I hope to hear from you soon. Do let me know if there is any prospect of seeing you? Next Wednesday is thirteen weeks since you went away. I must bid you adieu.

"You have many friends, though they have not noticed you by writing.

I am sorry they have been so negligent. I hope no share of that blame lies upon

"Your most affectionate,
"PORTIA."

Blame, indeed! With Portia farming and housekeeping, running to town meetings, visiting the camps, keeping an eye on prices and politics, neighbors and enemies, Braintree and Cambridge and beleaguered Boston!

This one or that, in Boston, had died. Gage had issued an order that no person should be seen to wipe his face with a white handkerchief, the white handkerchief being a signal of mutiny. . . . The prisoners from Bunker Hill, wounded, had been brought over by night to the Long Wharf and left there till morning, without care, and finally put into the jail, where they were civilly treated. Inhabitants had been forbidden to go upon their houses, or upon any eminence, that night, on pain of death. The wounded were dying fast—some said of lack of food; some said of poisoned bullets. . . .

The rumors flew. She discounted some of them; feared that some more might be true; and believed the rest, from veracious couriers.

The details came in thinly. Bribes were given and received as the price of escape. Houshold goods and personal belongings might or might not have to be left behind and sacrificed to the gods of war.

"My own house," a fleeing woman told Abigail, "that stands—or stood—across the street from Mr. Samuel Quincy's, where General Burgoyne is lodged—I saw them hacking raw meat on my polished mahogany tables; I saw my damask curtains flying in the rain, and my cushions soiled and torn. . . ."

But there were worse troubles. Hardwick, the stocking weaver, was imploring her to have Bass procure for him a hundred of needles so that he might carry on with his necessary work. Necessary articles of all kinds were running perilously short; and even the grain would not last for ever. . . .

But Abigail's letters to John dwelt on the bright side.

"Dearest Friend," wrote Abigail to John,

"I received yours of July 7th, for which I heartily thank you. It was the longest and best letter I have had; the most leisurely, and therefore the most sentimental. Previous to your last, I had written you and made some complaints of you, but I will take them all back again. Only continue your obliging favors, whenever your time will allow you to devote one moment to your absent Portia. . . .

"Your address meets with general approbation here; your petitioning the King again, pleases (forgive me if I say the timid and the weak) those persons who were esteemed the lukewarm, and who think no works of supererogation can be performed to Great Britain; whilst others say you heap coals of fire upon the heads of your enemies. You know you are considered here as a most perfect body; if one member is by any means rendered incapable of acting, 't is supposed the deficiency will be made up. . . .

"It was generally thought that Gage would make an attempt to come out either Election day, or upon the Fast; but I could not believe we should be disturbed upon that day. Even 'the devils believe and tremble,' and I really believe they are more afraid of the Americans' prayers than of their swords. I could not bear to hear our inanimate old bachelor. Mrs. Cranch and I took our chaise and went to hear Mr. Haven, of Dedham, and we had no occasion to repent eleven miles' ride; especially as I had the pleasure of spending the day with my namesake and sister delegate.* Why should we not assume your titles when we give you up our names? I found her comfortably situated in a little country cottage, with patience, perseverance, and fortitude for her companions, and in better health than she has enjoyed for many months past.

"I fear General Thomas being overlooked, and Heath placed over him, will create much uneasiness. I know not who was to blame, but it is likely to make a great and fatal gap in the army. If Thomas resigns, all his officers resign; and Mr. Thomas cannot with honor hold under Heath. The camp will evince to every eye how good an officer he has been; but this is out of my sphere. I only say what others say, and what the general disposition of the people is.

"I need not say how much I want to see you, but no one will credit my story of your returning in a month. I hope to have the best of proofs to convince them.

"It cannot need any to convince you how sincerely

"I am your affectionate

"PORTIA."

* Mrs. Sam Adams, who resided at Dedham.

She could tell him, also, that the Massachusetts legislature was preparing to offer John Adams the Chief Justiceship of Massachusetts, by way of a foundation for a new judiciary.

She could tell him there was grain, for the while, and that the specter of famine was fought off for that long.

Yet there were other specters that the patriots dreaded. Sickness, always feared in this province of extremes of heat and cold, was feared more than ever now, under the helter-skelter conditions of war.

Battle, hunger, injustice had made Abigail's heart bleed for her neighbors' trouble. Sickness, coming now, caused it to be riven for her own.

John had come home for the brief summer vacation of the Congress. And as ever, while he was with her, dread had been relegated to the background. But with John's departure again, dread marched forth, sick and grinning.

It was not the smallpox, this time. That, fortunately, had been quelled almost to a reasonable submission by the inoculations that John's great-uncle had introduced. People now had the smallpox largely by inoculation, and oftener lived than died, at any rate!

It was not the smallpox, but a foe as deadly in its ravages.

Dysentery!

Dysentery in Boston; in Hingham; in the camps on the hillsides. It raged like a storm, and did not abate.

They came to tell her one day that John's younger brother, Elihu, a soldier in the Continental army, was sick with the dread disease.

She helped tend him, lying racked with agony in his mother's house. And before long she was forced to prepare John, in Philadelphia, for the worst, for there was little hope for Elihu.

And then, one night, there came the first, uncurbed groan from Isaac, the stable-man, and Abigail knew that the specter was here in her own house, too. Her heart like lead, she hastened to him, for he must be nursed. Her home, her always happy home, that had so

long been an asylum for the needy, must now be a hospital for the sick.

All night the suffering Isaac groaned, on his narrow tossed bed in the attic. All night he endured his agonies, wasting under the eyes of his ministrators. No one slept. They could not, for his agonized outcries.

She told herself she must keep up. Everything depended on her. She must not give way to the weakness and pain that were creeping over her. . . .

But she, too, was overcome, in spite of her efforts. The kind mistress of the house and farm, without whose guidance the household seemed to falter, herself was laid low.

She would send for John. She must not think of sending for him! Did she want him to take sick with the rest? But she needed him!

She was up before she was well. For her baby, Tommy, lay at death's door.

One after another they fell. The house was a hospital indeed. She herself could hardly stand upright. But she must conquer weakness, distress and deadly unhappiness. She must give praise that, thus far, none had been lost. All around them, families were being depleted—wiped out, sometimes. This epidemic, it was said, was more devastating a one than the oldest man remembered. She could get no one to help her for long with her sick, for no one for long was well. . . .

As for war, politics, country—all were blotted out in the intimate, dank reality.

Patty the maid; and Tommy, were the most desperately sick. Abigail worked over the girl as though she had been her child also. Sue was able to go home, and wished to, to relieve her mistress.

All Abigail's profound concern and affection for her "girls" came uppermost as she tried to save Patty from death.

But she tried in vain.

Patty—a willing, comely girl—passed away. The household mourned her, mistress and children and servants. And as they mourned they feared for baby Tommy, whose red cheeks and plump infant beauty had already been stripped from him.

Would Tommy be the next?

Elihu was gone. In the gray house next door one mother mourned.

Patty was gone.

And Abigail Adams was praying.

CHAPTER XVIII

GRIEF

TOMMY did not die. He came through the ordeal, a frail, thin shadow of his former self. But Abigail gave praise.

Anguish, however, of the most poignant degree was in waiting for her, after all the work and the succor and the endurance. Every woman of the countryside, sick or well, was playing her part in fighting the war against disease. Abigail's sister, Mary Cranch, already a lady of mercy to the poor and suffering, was redoubling her efforts in the town. Betsey, now the daughter of the Parsonage, was busied likewise. And Mrs. Smith, their mother, beloved in Weymouth, was as busy as any of her three daughters, or as the tireless minister, her husband. Abigail, indeed, protested. Her mother took too many risks. Abigail knew that she herself was guilty, but her mother was not as strong or as young as she, and not so sorely visited, either.

The protests proved unavailing. Tragedy stalked Abigail Adams yet again, and swiftly. It left her dazed, stunned, and alone.

The virulent flame touched her mother, as they had endeavored not to fear it would; and she was not able to withstand it. One

moment, it seemed to the daughters, she was smiling on the sufferers and visiting her kindliness on the parish; the next—she was gone! A gap that could not be filled. She had been Abigail's counselor and close friend. And John was far away.

"Have pity on me, O thou my beloved,
For the hand of God presseth me sore."

It was a cry from an Abigail swept, for the moment, before the devastating onrush of her emotions, and when it came to John in shaken black and white on the leaves of a letter from his wife, it ravaged his soul likewise.

Elihu, and now "Mamma" Smith—the gracious lady whom he had respected and admired, whom Abigail had worshiped, and the children also. Dared he take horse and ride to his "dearest friend," as his heart cried out to do?

But that old enemy, his conscience, held him.

He must remain, and do his work, and appease his longing and his sympathetic impatience in pouring out his thoughts for her on paper.

"I will never," he vowed in an early December letter that brought her much calm, " come here again without you, if I can persuade you to come with me. Whom God has joined together ought not to be put asunder so long, with their own consent. We will bring master Johnny with us; you and he shall have the small-pox here, and we will be as happy as Mr. Hancock and his lady. Thank Abby and John for their letters, and kiss Charles and Tom for me. John writes like a hero, glowing with ardor for his country and burning with indignation against her enemies. . . ."

He needed her. She would go to Philadelphia with him the next time, as Dorothy Hancock had gone with her John; and they need never be put asunder again.

But that happy consummation was not to be achieved for many a day.

CHAPTER XIX

WAITING

ABIGAIL heard the story from a fellow-officer of Knowlton's, and found that she was still able to laugh. She had heard that Major Knowlton, of the Boston Regiment, had been commended by General Washington for bravery at Bunker Hill. He had been in the thick of the fighting; at the tail-end of the retreat, when it came.

Knowlton, it seemed, perhaps growing tired of passive beleaguering, had engineered a ruse, and it had worked.

Knowlton had said if redcoats could pillage and fire, why, he could do some firing, too. And he had gone forth when the generals and their officers were in Boston, at Faneuil Hall, which was now a playhouse. There was a comic on the stage, personating General Washington, and making general mock of him, when up dashed a sergeant and shouted, "The Yankees! The Yankees are attacking the works on Bunker Hill!" The joke was they had thought it was a part of the play, General Burgoyne's play, "The Boston Blockade," which they had just witnessed. They had laughed, and clapped their hands, and stamped their feet, and shouted bravos. But it was no part of the play, as they found when a British general rose and commanded, "Officers to their posts! All officers to their posts!" And the officers had run out, and summoned their men, and hastened under arms to Bunker Hill. But they had come too late. Knowlton had made his scheme good, and done his burning, and secured a small number of prisoners into the bargain, with the help of his men who had volunteered with him. So the redcoats ran but to smoldering ruins of some half-dozen of their new-built strongholds; and as for the Tory ladies—they had run another way—home, and timidly, without their military escorts!

It was then that Abigail found she still could laugh, as the patriot women in Boston were laughing, behind their hands. It was a good joke on the Tory ladies, who turned their noses up so high against their patriot sisters, and helped so insidiously for their discomfort. Well, they had had their taste of discomfort that night, truly—scuttling through the streets unaided, in their velvets and satins and their perishable shoes!

There was not much to laugh at otherwise, although a change in the British command had lightened things in the town a trifle. Gage was gone at last, and Howe succeeded him, as Commander with full powers. Howe at least would listen to complaints, and try to right them. But even he could not do much, in the way of things. He did not bid Burgoyne take his Light Dragoons out of the Old South Church. He did not order them to take up the gravel from the holy floor, or rip out the drinking bar that they had put in the gallery. He did not bid them cease turning the sacred edifice —thrice sacred to the cause of liberty—into a riding school and, worse, a circus. It was, in any case, too late to put back the pews that the soldiers had burned, the silken hangings they had taken away, the books and papers that had added to their fires. He could not put back the houses of Boston that had been demolished for kindling, the noble trees that had fallen under the ax. There were grenadiers barracked in West Church, infantry in that of Brattle Street. Clinton lived in Hancock's house, Percy in the lovely mansion of Mr. Gardner Greene.

But when Howe took over the Province House, life did become a little more bearable for those professional men—doctors, lawyers, clergy—who remained. The redcoat soldiers, mischievous for sheer want of something legitimate to do, boycotted, penned, were now restrained from wanton destruction of property, when Howe knew of it, and could spare a moment from his not-too-passive campaign to listen to the selectmen's grievances.

"Our grievances," quoth old Mather Byles, pastor of the Hollis Street Church, and a popular wit, "will now be red-dressed." And

Howe was "red-dressing" them in his own fashion, though with an eye to the main chance.

There was little enough to laugh at, however. Little enough for the women of Boston; little enough for Abigail, in Braintree; longing for John's return.

* * * * * * * *

On a winter's day there were hoof-beats once more—the hoof-beats, this time, of a solitary horse, resounding on the long, winding road that led past the farmhouse. And perhaps a little girl, waiting at a white-barred gate, her back to the hill; her face to the road, jumping for joy as she heard them.

Small Abigail was nine years old, a serious, charming child, delicate of feature but sturdy of form; dark-eyed, brown-haired, pretty. She would be rigged out in her best, in honor of the great occasion. A warm cloak and her ugly winter hood, long and deep and sheltering, to keep out the chill of the December day, and little Abby hopping, now and then, from one calamanco slipper to the other, partly in excitement and partly to keep warm, also. She might, at least, stand out here while her mother finished her preparations within the red cottage, and watch for "Papa," who was coming home for a holiday with them, from the Congress in far-off Philadelphia.

With a gay ruffled apron peeking through her wrap, and the hint of a soft petticoat below, and on her wee hands, when she took them from the warm folds, long netted mittens, she would be a sight for a weary traveler's sore eyes. (No mere figure of speech this, either, for Mr. Adams' eyes had lately been troubling him grievously, and had had to be doctored.)

Abby must do her impatient jigging carefully, because her corset was rigid and the heels of her best shoes very high. . . .

At last! There he is, far off, yet, down the long, curving road.

"Oh, Mamma! My Papa is here! He is coming! Mamma! Mamma!"

A little flying form is out of the gate, and running in the road;

and Abigail, cheeks flushed, eyes like stars, a hastily flung shawl about her, the small Tommy, a like bundle, at her skirts, is following.

Abby and Abigail and the baby, running from the farmhouse; Charles and the handsome Johnny arriving, it might be, at the crucial moment from their schooling;—and John, the traveler; the longed-for traveler!

He is off his mount, flinging the reins to the hastening Isaac. He is clasping her.

"Abby."

"My dear, dear husband!"

And there is no war, there are no wrongs, no sicknesses, no dreads, for another brief hour.

He would like to tell her everything in a moment—that first moment of glad unburdening, with the children smothering him and searching his pockets and his saddle-bag for presents, while Abigail cries for joy. And then a black-clad, proud old farm-woman appears, and greetings begin all over again. John embraces the old lady, his mother, with infinite tenderness. Brother Peter's children come running; Peter himself, stout and hurrying.

Home, and peace! For a few brief weeks of that comparatively mild winter. Farming, and bargaining for commodities that dwindled; walking with his wife or with his "babes," reading, and writing, and visiting at farmhouse and parsonage and mansion; grasping scraps of news from Boston, despatches from Watertown. . . .

When would Boston's day come—the day of liberation?

It did not come while John was there. While John was at Braintree on his vacationing, all was peace—outwardly, at any rate; as peaceful as Abigail could make it. To their own hearts they might be whispering "Tomorrow? The day after that?"; but they conversed, and discussed, and enjoyed, as calmly as they could.

The feasting in Philadelphia, he told her, was over; the Con-

gress was no longer a semi-social affair, but a corporate body of committees and sub-committees and steady work. But still it was in no sense a Government, or even an official voice of the nation. It was yet but a gathering of separate committees, eyeing each other with more or less suspicion and jealousy; New England, in the north, and Virginia, in the south, forming the wheels of the chariot for any progress that was made, and carrying the central body of provinces more or less strainingly between them.

But where there had been many to condemn Mr. Adams for his rash, intercepted letters, there was gradually appearing an increasing number to reflect, at least, on the sentiments contained in the letters. One or two had begun to approach him in quite complimentary sympathy. And for himself—he would not take back a word, however much he might regret the diverting of the stream.

Confidence in him was unmistakably trickling back, however. He was on innumerable committees, heeded in debate, allowed the floor daily for his pleas for state governments, and even for his denunciations of the weak folly of petitioning a king who obviously saw no need or reason for unbending.

Yet they were accomplishing too little, and the crisis could not be long delayed.

"The situation of things," he had written her before his return, "is so alarming that it is our duty to prepare our minds and hearts for every event, even the worst. From my earliest entrance into life I have been engaged in the public cause of America; and from first to last I have had upon my mind a strong impression that things would be wrought up to their present crisis. I saw from the beginning that the controversy was of such a nature that it never would be settled, and every day convinces me more and more. This has been the source of all the disquietude of my life. It has lain down and risen up with me these twelve years. The thought that we might be driven to the sad necessity of breaking our connection with Great Britain, exclusive of the carnage and destruction which it was easy to see must attend the separation, always gave me a great deal of grief. And even now I would gladly retire from public life forever, renounce all chance for profits or honors from the public, nay, I would cheerfully contribute my little property, to

obtain peace and liberty. But all these must go and my life too before I can surrender the right of my country to a free Constitution. I dare not consent to it. I should be the most miserable of mortals ever after, whatever honors or emoluments might surround me."

So he had worked with all his might, from seven in the morning, sometimes, until ten at night—in committee, in session of Congress, in committee again. Sometimes he had been sure he was at breaking point, for he was a nervous man; but he went on—and on he was determined to go, till independence, and a confederation of these at present disunited states, might be attained. Characteristically, he prayed his Maker that he might not break down before he saw it.

But holding himself in check had made his pen grow bitter, and his tongue also, and not without reason.

For all this time, were not American soldiers besieging British, and anti-British local governments springing up here and there? And, after all, were not those moderates who were the cause of his impatience—John Dickinson and Silas Deane and their fellows—just as much "rebels," for even taking part in the councils of a Continental Congress, as any John or Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, or Richard Henry Lee, or Thomas Jefferson, or Patrick Henry of Virginia?

The body of the Congressional coach had moved onward, however, sometimes against itself. John had been appointed to a committee entrusted to procure and equip a fleet to be put at the command of Washington. This was work after his own heart, and he showed it. He had collected data; found men; hunted equipment; studied; and finally drawn up a maritime code which was to guide the navy of America for many a day.

But it did not all go as smoothly. John was of an unofficial faction that favored sending an ambassador to France, to talk, if possible, with Louis XVI on certain affairs of finance and arms. . . . But the time was not ripe. Congress was not in step with the propounders to the tune of committing itself by asking aid from France—as yet.

This time Massachusetts was indeed not the most radical. Virginia, in the person of Patrick Henry, was quite ready to offer France land if she would ally with free America. But John Adams, for one, was not seeking, and never would seek, actual foreign alliances, and desired nothing more from Europe than sound commercial treaties.

And while they had argued, he told her, the country needed money, and Washington needed men, and the Congress had yet no real power to secure either. It could not levy taxes, save through the separate states according to their feeling. There was no means of meeting the expenses of the soldiers who lay with Washington at Watertown; State militiamen still served their few months and resigned, as of old; and the Congress-appointed Commander-in-Chief was hard put to it to hold together anything that could be called an American army, let alone to clothe it and feed it and keep it healthy and satisfied. . . . His army was already depleted, and those that remained began to be as restless as the hard-run redcoats penned up in Boston. They had no warmth, no blankets. They went barefoot, sometimes, and often hungry. And arms, as ever, were wanting.

Where were the money, the supplies, the men that the Congress had tacitly pledged itself to give him?

"Well," mused a stout-stomached, stout-hearted officer of Washington's, whose special problem was powder for the guns; "if we can't beg powder we'll have to borrow it. I'll run up to Ticonderoga and bring down some of the stores from there."

A mere matter of miles through wild woodlands, deep in snow. A mere return of miles with sleds heavily laden.

But Knox, the bookseller's boy, was true to his word. Through snow and wilderness Colonel Knox dragged the powder down; and Washington—and Boston—breathed again.

At least they could wait, and watch, with something in the bellies of the guns, even if those of Washington's thinning ranks of men were empty.

CHAPTER XX

DELIVERANCE

IT WAS only when John went away again that the "tomorrows" mounted once more, and seemed to want to burst Abigail's heart. This waiting for the guns—Washington's guns—to spit and flame for the liberation of Boston seemed almost worse than the anguish of battle itself. It *was* worse; for battle must come, if Boston was ever to be freed.

John Adams had sat with his friends of the Massachusetts legislature. He had been tendered the offer of the Chief Justiceship, and had accepted it, on the understanding that he was not to be asked to take his seat unless some contingency should arise that might make it imperative. He had more important work yet to do.

And now, with a parting embrace for each of his dear ones, a parting wish and a parting prayer, he was off again, to visit Washington upon the lines, to talk with him; and to be on his way to the Congress once more.

The lines were at Watertown, at Roxbury, at Cambridge.

He wrote Abigail that he had dined with the General at the lodging of Colonel Mifflin, the aide-de-Camp, at Cambridge, and with Mistress Martha Washington, who had come to be near her husband. He had found Washington entertaining the sachems and chieftains of the French Caghnawaga tribe of Indians, and their wives and children also. Picturesque guests, in their paint and their blankets and their feathers; their manner proud yet friendly, their voices staccato and harsh, save for the few white men who seemed to have strayed in and stayed on as members of the tribe.

"Mr. Adams," General Washington had told them, introducing John, "is one of the grand council fire at Philadelphia."

Some of the chiefs and braves had stared at him, and presently approached him with no little awe, and bowed almost to the ground. And each one seized his hand and pumped it, and each made a compliment in his curious English.

The Indians had visited the lines. They had seen the camp at Cambridge, and were to see Roxbury. Washington was presenting them with clothes, and little trinkets, as gifts, before they left. . . .

Then Washington had buttonholed John and asked him of matters nearer home—personal matters, of Abigail and the children; official ones, of powers and plans and achievements.

"I feel that my hands are tied," the Virginian had confessed. "I never know how far my jurisdiction extends. I cannot act—or I fear to, for I have no instructions and no information. . . . "

Mr. Adams could smile grimly at such an admission. It was the exact situation of the Continental Congress! They, also, felt their hands were tied. They, also, could not act, or feared to. . . . But he advised Washington not to let such doubts delay him. The people's confidence was in him, and the Congress was at least united in his behalf. . . .

They had conversed at length; of Philadelphia; of the Massachusetts; of Virginia; and, the most, of Boston. . . .

John had a companion on this journey, in the person of Elbridge Gerry, newly appointed a brother delegate from the Massachusetts. Of him Mr. Adams wrote in the most glowing terms, and of their high hopes as they rode along—the stout farmer and the slender, bachelor idealist. John felt that he had talked to good purpose with his friends in the councils of his province. He carried now in his saddle-bag official letters to the Massachusetts delegates, praying them to further "such measures as shall to them appear best calculated for the establishment of right and liberty to the American colonies, upon a basis permanent and secure against the power and art of the British administration and guarded against any future encroachments of their enemies."

But once more Philadelphia struck cold. He could hope, now,

from his past impatient experience, that it would only be a temporary coldness. And indeed he feared, he said, that much might happen in the near future to chafe the cold ones into warmth. The conciliationists were spreading a report that commissioners for peace were on their way from the King. Time would prick that bubble—or he had studied the King to no purpose. And meanwhile Massachusetts, who must do much of her agitating from a discreet background, and Virginia, who had got into the manner of speaking out her mind, must wait. They wanted peace as much as the rest; but they found themselves unable any longer to hope for it. . . .

There was work enough, however, for Congress to do immediately. General Lee had gone off to New York. Troops must be found him—more troops, and more strength. The sympathetic Lord Sterling had joined forces with him there, but they needed strength from other quarters. Congress worked to give it to them; had sent them a battalion of seven hundred from the Jerseys—the Jersey minute-men. And a like battalion from Philadelphia. And four more Pennsylvania regiments, and another from Jersey, would be ready to go before long.

Abigail sat writing to John on the second of March, in the year 1776. She could not tell him much. It was still, she said, "tomorrow" and "tomorrow."

"But when the dreadful tomorrow will be, I know not," she wrote.

And then——

"But hark! The house this instant shakes with the roar of cannon. . . . "

She dropped her pen, and ran to the door. There were men riding by—galloping by.

"What is it?" she cried, distraught, above the boom of guns that shattered the air. "What is it?"

"A cannonade from our army! The militia are called out—all

that remain. They are ordered to repair to the lines Monday night by twelve o'clock."

It was Saturday. Through the terrible hours of the night—through the terrible hours of darkness, the cannon roared without ceasing. Morning came, and they roared on still, though a degree more fitful and spasmodic. . . . All through Sunday the gusts of shell-fire raged, growing, however, a little weaker, more hesitant. . . .

On Monday the militia mustered in Braintree, as they were mustering in Hingham and Weymouth and Milton, and throughout the province. Provisions were foraged for, packed, and loaded; and by three o'clock the order was given to march.

That night scarcely a man, but for the groups of guards in the towns, remained. On the coast, strange militiamen, summoned from more remote places, kept watch in the place of those who had marched away.

When the last man had gone, Abigail mounted Penn's Hill once again, and sat herself down on the grass to watch the awesome spectacle of war.

She could see every shell that was thrown into the suffering town, and every shell that answered, swelling the mighty pandemonium. In her heart, pandemonium likewise reigned. She felt awed. The sound and the sight, she wrote John, later, were "sublime." She sat there, an onlooker—and was stricken anew by the piercing thought, like a bullet lodging in her own breast: her countrymen must die!

She retired after midnight. And at one she was starting up, to dress herself again. For there was no sleep.

The house was rocking on its ancient foundations; the windows rattled like the chattering teeth of a giant. Shells were bursting all too near,—twenty-four pounders, harrowing the ears and the soul as they ravaged the ranks of men; bringing the scene of battle once more before wakeful, sleep-robbed eyes.

At six it ceased.

At noon she heard that Dorchester Hill had been taken; that four thousand Americans lay between her home and Boston; and that patriot losses had been small. They said that British ships were drawing close around the town, to defend it. And they said the night would surely bring more fighting.

It was agony to Abigail, even while her heart rejoiced at the victory. Her brain, too long wakeful, seemed likely to burst. She could stand no more. She wished, with unbearable aching, for John. Would that she were with him, out of hearing, for there was nothing that she, a woman, could do to help! She felt depressed, shaken to the vitals.

Poor Boston! Would anything of Boston remain by morning? Was the brave town doomed? Would that be the end?

What came next was anticlimax; or so it looked to overwrought, wincing minds and fearful vision. On Thursday the militia marched back.

What! All that inferno, all that bloodshed and confusion and terror, for the taking of one insignificant hill; when Washington had waited all winter long? Was it for this—a point of vantage—that he had waited?

Must Boston still travail?

Abigail tried to distract her mind by continuing her broken letter to John—begun almost a week ago. A week of warfare—for what?

But as on Saturday, so today. As she wrote,—the roar of cannon! . . .

Her pen dropped from her hand, and she fell again to trembling. She could pity those in torn Boston, friend or foe; but still more did her heart yearn toward the men on the hills close by, braving ships' cannonade and the ceaseless fire that answered theirs from the landworks.

It went on all night, never ceasing, like some fantastic, gigantic thunderstorm that had run amok.

But it did not accomplish anything—apparently. Boston had not been Washington's objective—apparently. Apparently Washington's

objective had been the small hill nearest the town—Nook's Hill.

He had not taken it. That dread thunder had foiled him—apparently.

Only apparently. . . .

With the daylight, and the lifting of a white fog that had fallen during the night, Howe discovered two new causes of frustration and dismay.

The first was a complicated series of entrenchments overshadowing the occupied town from Dorchester Heights, on the Braintree side of Boston,—raised, like a menacing club of war, above the British heads.

He would see about this! This could be handled as Bunker Hill had been; they could not hold such advantage long!

Once more the officers hastened to the Province House. Once more there was hasty confab.

But only once more—in Boston!

As they talked, a friend arose to the entrenched Americans on the hill. Man's thunder and lightning had prevailed all night; Nature's storm arose this morning, and sided with the patriots. It raged, its fury unabating. Wind and rain, hail and blizzard, all laughed in the faces of those who would take boats and fill them with men and arms and send them to Castle Island, across the bay, to wipe out the overnight fortress. All day the wind howled with laughter at the schemes of man; all the next, and the next, and the next! No boats could live across in such a storm; no guns could land. But Washington, on that insignificant little hill that had begun to frown on Boston, could work in it, and did. When the storm abated at last, another storm had spent itself, quelled by the now overpowering menace from the insignificant hill. Howe knew it, and could give but one reply to Boston's selectmen when they came to call.

They told him that his troops could embark unmolested, provided he gave his guarantee that they would leave the town likewise unhurt. Washington was ready—supplies, men, trenches, posi-

tion. He held the upper hand, and Howe knew it. There was no taking the bristling Dorchester Hill any more; there was no sense in sacrificing more men, putting town and townsfolk to fire and sword. He was out, as far as Boston was concerned, unless he contemplated a wanton sacrifice of army and town to the sweeping menace.

He marched his men through Boston for the final time. By daybreak on Saturday the boats were loading—just two weeks since the Dorchester battle had started. By noon, the last had cast away.

And now Boston was to see an invasion indeed!

CHAPTER XXI

REJOICING

THERE was smallpox in the town. Misery, disease, danger. Along the Neck the British soldiers had placed traps and barricades to stop the Americans' progress.

But none of these could keep the neighbors out.

The neighbors, from the country round, marched across—through traps, through danger, into the jaws of possible pestilence, following their soldiers in—hard on the soldiers' heels, caring for nothing beyond one fact. Boston was Boston again. Boston was theirs.

Days and days the entry took, from the moment when Colonel Ebenezer Learned and General Ward, at the head of five hundred men, flung back the barriers of the British works on the Neck, and led their soldiers across, past the tangles and roots and mounds that had been set to bar their way.

Down at the end of the Common, General Putnam was landing, assigned by Washington to the Boston command—in place of Howe, retired.

And Washington himself rode in that day, to take the fruits of his victory, and to safeguard his troops as far as possible from contagion of the smallpox, when they came.

On the twentieth of March, two days after, the main army marched into town; and by the twenty-second the entries to the city were thronged with surging friends. With these last came Abigail, and to the house in Queen Street, which she found, to her surprise and satisfaction, standing as before.

General Washington was in Boston eight days, seeing works thrown up on Fort Hill, and ordering those erected by the Governor demolished. The Massachusetts Legislature came back to town, and received his report and counsel. The General was here, there, and everywhere, at the request of townsfolk and council and duty. He reviewed his troops on the Common. He marched with them in formal procession, attended by his officers and their retinues, through battered, cheering hordes, from the Council Chamber to the Old Brick Church for a service of thanksgiving. With them he dined, as a guest of the town, at the "Bunch of Grapes," in King Street.

And then, while Congress in Philadelphia was voting him a medal of honor for his brilliant siege, he assembled his men and his commanders, and left, flags flying, drums and fifes aplay, multitude shouting itself hoarse.

For Howe had sailed—but never for England!

Boston began to ache from healing wounds.

Abigail went back to Braintree with a full heart for liberated Boston, and confessed to a somewhat blank, dazed feeling of wonder as to which way her news would trickle through to her now. For the soldiers on the hills had been her friends, and she found that she missed them!

CHAPTER XXII

STATESMANSHIP

"I LONG to hear," wrote Abigail, "that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

"That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute; but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why, then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity? Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex; regard us then as beings placed by Providence under your protection, and in imitation of the Supreme Being make use of that power only for our happiness."

But John, with his tongue in his cheek, wrote back:

"I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our struggle has loosened the bonds of government everywhere; that children and apprentices were disobedient; that schools and colleges were grown turbulent; that Indians slighted their guardians, and negroes grew insolent to their masters. But your letter was the first intimation that another tribe, more numerous and powerful than all the rest, were grown discontented. This is rather too coarse a compliment, but you are so saucy, I won't blot it out. Depend upon it, we know better than to repeal our masculine systems. Although they are in full force, you know they are little more than theory. We dare not exert our power in its full latitude. We are obliged to go fair and softly, and, in practice, you know we are the subjects. We have only the name of masters, and rather than give up this, which would completely subject us to the despotism of the petticoat, I hope General Washington and all our brave heroes would fight;

I am sure every good politician would plot, as long as he would against despotism, empire, monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy or ochlocracy. A fine story indeed! I begin to think the ministry as deep as they are wicked. After stirring up tories, land-jobbers, trimmers, bigots, Canadians, Indians, Negroes, Hanoverians, Hessians, Russians, Irish Roman Catholics, Scotch renegadoes, at last they have stimulated the . . . to demand new privileges and threaten to rebel."

Abigail bore the letter in some glee to show Mercy Warren, to whom she was carrying sister Betsey from the saddened parsonage for a brief visit at Plymouth. Mercy was always glad to entertain her friends. She and Abigail possessed so much in common—and the stately Abigail, witty and charming and sensible, must have appeared a stimulating contrast to the big-eyed, grave and smart Mercy, of the brilliant pen-words, the plays, the verses, the stinging satires on Tory men and British aims. It was a wonderful visit for Abigail, and for Betsey too, who adored both Mercy and Plymouth itself.

But Abigail had not finished with John yet:

"I cannot say," she wrote next, "that I think you are very generous to the ladies; for, whilst you are proclaiming peace and good-will to men, emancipating all nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over wives. But you must remember that arbitrary power is, like most other things which are very hard, very liable to be broken; and, notwithstanding all your wise laws and maxims, we have it in our power, not only to free ourselves, but to subdue our masters, and, without violence, throw both your natural and legal authority at our feet;—

'Charm by accepting, by submitting sway,
Yet have our humor most when we obey.'"

At least she had the last word—for what could John add to that?

In truth both stood in need of lighter interlude. Mrs. Adams was fretting because patriots were not quicker in fortifying liberated Boston. She was aching from the wound that a visit to Boston for the Masonic funeral of the lamented Warren had reopened.

She had little news to boast of now. She longed to know whither the army had moved, and what was passing. But meanwhile she welcomed scraps from the villages and waterside—a schooner taken, with money, plate and merchandise, and a number of prisoners, too; a scow from the Grenadas, with—never!—three hundred and fifty puncheons of good West India rum, and forty-three barrels of sugar, and twelve thousand and five hundredweight of coffee. A thrice-welcome prize, this one!

She wrote of these things—and of her innermost thoughts—and she begged John to burn all her letters. But he did not. They were all he had, and besides, her sentiments and her impatience were so exactly his; and kindred souls were too few.

"A people may let a king fall," she opined, "yet still remain a people; but, if a king let his people slip from him, he is no longer a king. And as this is most certainly our case, why not proclaim to the world, in decisive terms, your own importance?

"Shall we not be despised by foreign powers, for hesitating so long at a word? . . ."

Milkmaid, housewife, successful farmer, weaver, teacher, wife, mother and philosopher by turns—a full life, but one not without its humors when you could see them.

She found time to visit—to run with Mercy and Betsey on board a hospitable brig, on a tour of inspection. The American navy, at home. The sailors, she reports, were silent, respectful, well-mannered, for their captain was a God-fearing man.

She took a dish of tea in the Captain's saloon, and with him inspected the ship's arms. But when those arms sent a polite "Boom!" after her and her party as they left in the Captain's barge, "I could have dispensed with the parting salute!" cried Abigail.

"I am happy to learn from your letter," wrote John, "that a flame is at last raised among the people, for the fortification of the harbor. Whether Nantasket or Point Alderton would be proper posts to be taken, I can't say. But I would fortify every place which is proper, and which cannon could be

obtained for. Generals Gates and Mifflin are now here. General Washington will be here tomorrow, when we shall consult and deliberate concerning the operations of the ensuing campaign.

"We have dismal accounts from Europe of the preparations against us. This summer will be very important to us. We shall have a severe trial of our patience, fortitude and perseverance. But I hope we shall do valiantly, and tread down our enemies.

"I have some thoughts of petitioning the General Court for leave to bring my family here. I am a lonely, forlorn creature here. . . .

"Your sentiments of the duties we owe to our country are such as become the best of women and the best of men. Among all the disappointments and perplexities which have fallen to my share in life, nothing has contributed so much to support my mind as the choice blessing of a wife whose capacity enabled her to comprehend, and whose pure virtue obliged her to approve the views of her husband. This has been the cheering consolation of my heart in my most solitary, gloomy and disconsolate hours. In this remote situation, I am deprived in a great measure of this comfort. Yet I read and read again your charming letters, and they serve me, in some faint degree, as a substitute for the company and conversation of the writer. I want to take a walk with you in the garden, to go over to the common, the plain, the meadow. I want to take Charles in one hand and Tom in the other, and walk with you, Abby on your right hand, and John upon my left, to view the corn fields, the orchards, &c.

"Alas, poor imagination! how faintly and imperfectly do you supply the want of originality and reality. But instead of these pleasing scenes of domestic life, I hope you will not be disturbed with the alarm of war.

"I hope, yet I fear. . . ."

And Abigail must have feared, also, though she would not confess it.

But things were moving—almost swiftly enough, at last, to please both. In January—six months ago, almost,—John Adams had been conversing in his chamber, one evening, with Mr. Wythe, one of the gentlemen from Virginia. They had talked of independence, and of the growing need for it—the subject ever nearest to John Adams' heart. Mr. Wythe had suggested that the greatest obstacle in the way of a declaration of such independence was the difficulty of agreeing upon a government for the future guidance of the

country. John asserted that each colony should first form a government for itself, as a free and independent state.

"What plan would you advise," asked Wythe, "for any one of the states?"

John replied that he had not given it much thought, but he sketched a few ideas as they occurred to him. The other man was impressed, and thoughtful.

"Would you put what you have said into writing?" he asked, at length, "and send it to me tomorrow?"

Now John Adams was no novice at governmental writings. Indeed, the much-vaunted "Common Sense," of Thomas Paine had at first been attributed to him—though in truth Mr. Adams found Paine's republican views sadly deficient in what he termed the "architectural element." Therefore he was glad of this opportunity to put his study of governmental principles, and his firm theories on the subject, down into black and white. He wrote his thoughts out that night, and sent the result to Wythe. Wythe promptly sent it on to his colleague and friend, Richard Henry Lee; and that same day Lee came to John and begged leave to have the writings printed. Mr. Adams felt constrained to deprecate the worth of it, but again would not refuse; only making the proviso that his name should be suppressed.

It made its appearance as a pamphlet entitled, "Thoughts on Government, in a Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend," and immediately met with the esteem and the thought and the bestirring that Wythe had predicted for it. It set people's thoughts at last on the fact that not only was the time ripe for a casting off of bonds in full, but, as someone said, "the country was rotten for want of it." In the spring, the North Carolina delegates came to John Adams, informing him that their State legislature had instructed them to apply to him for advice concerning a form of government to be instituted in their State. His later writings confess surprise and wonder that his name should have reached so far, and that he should have been so honored. He was on more committees at that

moment than any other member of the Congress, and thus had less time on his hands; but his heart and his brain belonged to the colonies, and if North Carolina thought he could help to bring about good government, why, he would find time for that help, too. So the letter to Wythe had led to another, on somewhat similar lines, addressed to the State of North Carolina.

The echo of all this approbation reached Abigail, of course, and she lost no time in inquiring of the circumstances, and in giving her own views on the effects and the consequence to current and future affairs. But John was still deprecating.

"It has contributed to set people thinking upon the subject," was all he had to say, "and in this respect has answered its end. The manufacture of governments having, since the publication of that letter, been as much talked of, as that of saltpetre was before. . . . I think you shine as a stateswoman of late, as well as a farmeress. Pray where do you get your maxims of state? They are very apropos. . . ."

CHAPTER XXIII

INDEPENDENCE

ABIGAIL waited, as ever, for news.

Gates, she knew, was to go to Canada, where the smallpox raged in the alarmingly small remnant of pro-patriot ground. General Thomas was dead of the sickness there. Gates was to take his command.

Meanwhile, predictions, probabilities—and then weeks to wait for affirmations and results. Years for results, perhaps. She steeled herself. There was always work—and her abiding belief in Heaven's good will.

"He who fed the Israelites in the wilderness, 'who clothes the lilies of the field, and feeds the young ravens when they cry,' will not forsake a people

engaged in so righteous a cause, if we remember his loving-kindness. We wanted powder—we have a supply. We wanted arms—we have been favored in that respect. We wanted hard money—twenty-two thousand dollars and an equal value in plate, are delivered into our hands."

It was true. The patriot ships had not been idle.

There was faith, then, to sustain her; and for the rest—she would be patient. She went back to her vegetables and her fruit, struggling against the late cold spell. John was writing of luscious cherries and strawberries, tender green peas from Philadelphia gardens, served to him at Philadelphia boards. Here, everything was late, just blossoming now, and in need of constant care and watching. The corn crop did not promise well. The weather was dry as well as cold.

There was enough to do; and if she often wished she were not a woman, and therefore barred from public service for her country, at least she could rejoice that she was allied to one so prominent in the country's work.

"Great things," John had written, "are on the tapis. These throes will usher in the birth of a fine boy."

It was a prophecy from one of those who ministered at the birth—one of those who conveyed the child Independence, that was born July second. For on the second Congress made Independence a reality by adopting the Declaration.

Perhaps none knew better than Abigail how great was her husband's contribution toward this epoch-making piece of legislation.

He had had plentiful opposition—he was always to have that, and perhaps to invite it, since he was unable to change his own temperament. Even his conscientiousness had been misconstrued. Maryland had made a move against personal power which left no loophole open for doubt that John Adams, in particular, was suspected, by Maryland at least, of pushing independence for office-

seeking purposes, in order that his own position as Chief Justice of Massachusetts would be rendered secure!

Such attacks were unimportant, save that they showed that the success of John Adams and his friends was feared. No one could doubt any longer that the whole machine was headed for free expression. Mr. Adams need no longer curb his ardor; Massachusetts need hold back no more. John, strategy-wise, had at last put all his cards on the table: "a government in every colony; a confederation among them all; and treaties with foreign nations to acknowledge us a sovereign state." On May 6 he had proposed a resolution. It had been debated for three days. And on May ninth it had been passed. It insured the first part of its triple scheme—or Adams personally insured it, rather; for, directly afterward, he, Rutledge and Lee had been named as a committee to report on the governmental situation. Their report, duly submitted, had embodied separation from Great Britain, the independence of the colonies, and the total suppression of the King's authority, for that the King's exertions were being put forward for the destruction of the good people of the colonies.

There had been a fight, as was to be expected. But the report had won out.

With victory, John Adams was imbued with the most solemn thoughts:

"Is it not a saying of Moses, 'Who am I, that I should go in and out before this great people?' When I consider the great events which are passed and those greater which are rapidly advancing, and that I may have been instrumental in touching some springs and turning some small wheels, which have had and will have such effects, I feel an awe upon my mind which is not easily described. Great Britain has at last driven America to the last step, a complete separation from her, a total, absolute independence, not only of her parliament but of her crown. For such is the amount of the resolve of the 15th. Confederation among ourselves or alliances with foreign nations are not necessary to a perfect separation from Great Britain. . . . Confederation will be necessary for our internal concord, and alliances may be so for our external defense."

If state government was the key to independence, independence was declared then and there, for most of the colonies complied with alacrity, and even Pennsylvania, with an assembly largely composed of the conciliatory party, had bowed before the wind of circumstance, and voted its own then active government incompetent.

The word alone remained. On June seventh, Richard Henry Lee, following the precedent which had made the South the spokesman for every move towards freedom, obtained the floor and moved certain resolutions respecting independency. John Adams seconded the motion. The historic debate, which lasted for several days, ensued, and meanwhile the way was cleared for a unanimity. Committees were appointed, the foremost charged with drafting an actual Declaration of Independence. The members of this were Jefferson, Franklin, Sherman, R. R. Livingston, and John Adams. A second committee was to arrange a plan of confederation; and a third would arrange for treaties with foreign powers. Upon the third, John had found himself likewise placed. More, he was placed at the head of a board of war and ordnance, composed of five of the members of Congress.

But there could not be too much work for him now! He would do it all, and when it was done,

> "I shall think that I have answered the end of my creation, and sing my *nunc dimittis,* return to my farm, ride circuits, plead law, or judge causes."

It was agreed that Jefferson, of the facile pen, should draft the Declaration, and when it had been handed to Mr. Adams, as it was to Mr. Franklin also, for correction or amendment, John found that it embodied in its resounding phrases and masterly construction more than one of his own warm views as expressed in his writings from his earliest days, and for the rest was utterly acceptable to him—though he doubted whether a certain passage concerning the slave trade would pass the southern delegates,—and, in fact,

it did not. Also he was fain to correct a word here and a phrase there, as Franklin did.

On July first, the debate had been resumed, on the original motion of Lee.

And then had John Adams come into his own! Jefferson, keen and cool and logical with pen and paper, was utterly lost and confused when it came to open debate. But not Adams! He had lived with these very questions—nursed them and studied them and followed their intricacies. He knew them inside out. They were the greatest problems—the most intense, the most stupendous of his whole career. And so he became more eloquent, more at ease, more skillful a fencer and ready a convincer, over the debates on the Declaration than ever before. It was now that he earned Jefferson's encomium, "He was the Colossus of that debate." "Atlas of Independence" they called him, and, in truth, it was his sturdy shoulders that had borne most of that prickly burden—an open declaration —to victory at last!

Looking back, it seemed to John, he confessed, that the whole thing had been sudden—a sudden upheaval, like an earthquake, and as changing. There had been folly; there had been wisdom. There had been suffering, and there would be more—maybe years of it to come. Well—let them come! The furnace would refine, the mill grind down. And his faith, though he believed it to be unfashionable, was, like Abigail's, in an overruling Providence.

At least none could say the Congress had been over-hasty; none could say they had not waited till the hopes of the most sanguine had been dashed. None could say that the will of the people had been taken before it matured, or through fear or haste or stress of any kind. Through the long months the papers had discussed it, pamphlets had broadcast it, societies, conventions, committees of safety, town and county meetings and private individuals had thrashed it out to the last word, to the last colony, the last man.

And the result? All thirteen former colonies—united. Thirteen United States!

The Declaration was resolved upon on July second. It was ratified and signed on July fourth. Mr. Adams, on the day between, looking back, wrote to his wife his belief that this would be

" . . . the most memorable epocha in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore.

"You will think me transported with enthusiasm, but I am not. I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure, that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet, through all the gloom, I can see the rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is more than worth all the means. And that posterity will triumph in that day's transaction, even although we should rue it, which I trust in God we shall not."

With what pride and how many tears Abigail read the overwhelming news may be imagined. They sent up a pæan of prayer and joy and thankfulness, in that house as in so many others throughout the land that day.

But in that house it was not alone abounding joy in a glorious country, their own, reborn.

It was pride, also, unalloyed, in a husband and father.

CHAPTER XXIV

JUBILATION

JOY in Braintree. Joy in Boston. Joy in all America. A lull of joy, between storms.

A storm of joy, rather, relieving them, leavening.

The warm thoughts of all the New England countryside turned

speedily to Boston, and once again the swarms of people followed their thoughts in person.

On a July day, in the wide paved roadway before the State House, Abigail stood, swaying with the multitude that packed around her.

There were field-pieces before the State House, standing where the King's cannon had stood not so very long since.

But these were no King's artillery. They belonged to the citizens who had suffered for them—and for want of them.

Soldiers stood there, massed, armed, as well equipped as might be yet; file on file of them, earning glances, cheers, and smiles. The Continental Army, that had driven out the ambitious Gage, the crestfallen Howe. Abigail felt her heart swell as she gazed on the ranks of blue-and-tan uniformed youths—the Artillery Company; on civilian-clad soldiers with cockades; on white strappings spotless, rifles punctiliously at the "present."

There was a stirring on the balcony of the old House. All eyes turned to the low, narrow window below the tower—the balconied window of that room where Adamses, Quincy, Hancock, Warren and their friends had met so often in council, and taken as their motto, out of love for the old building,

> "Let such, such only, tread this sacred floor,
> Who dare to love their country, and be poor."

Here, royal proclamations had sounded. Here the disowned King himself, George III, had been hailed on his accession, the people, well-administered and well-content, and little dreaming what his reign might hold, huzzaing for a new ruler.

There would be no more kings proclaimed from here.

The Independence of the United States was about to be acclaimed.

Looking back, many years later, John Adams was to vow that here, in truth, that child, Independence, had been born—here, in

the fire of Otis' eloquence, in town meetings that had sounded the clash of resentment over the first violation of the people's privileges.

There was a stir on the balcony. A rippling wave of anticipation among the crowd below.

Colonel Crafts, temporarily commanding the troops in Boston, appeared, accoutred, cocked hat under arm, a scroll held by its unrolled rods between his poised hands.

There was silence. No need for Sheriff Greenleaf to raise his hand. No need for the little gathering of the elect, supporting the Colonel on the balcony, to set an example. Silence had already fallen, complete, sudden, anticipatory.

"A proclamation for Independence of these United States. . . . "

Abigail had attended the church meeting earlier; but of a certainty she was still praying for her country, to which she would always belong, heart, soul and body; her country, that needed her man more, even, than she needed him; that should possess him, before her, so long as the need lasted.

The soldier up there was reading Thomas Jefferson's written word—the word that five favored patriots, John among them, together had put into thought and coherence. The fateful word that should set the path of the future, for good or ill of future generations. For good! How could it be otherwise?

"God save our American States!"

They were shouting it from the balcony. "God save our American States!" Men with hats flung high from upflung hands, excited men, red-faced, glowing. "Huzza for them! Huzza! Our American States!"

And surely three such cheers had never rent the welkin before! Bells—the fateful bells!—were ringing; guns were booming from privateers in the harbor, from commissioned ships, from forts, from batteries, everywhere. The assembled soldiers, rigid with emotion, raised their rifles and fired a salute, high.

And still the people cheered, equaling the tumultuous sound

of the shot. Everyone was laughing. Everyone was crying. Everyone was dancing, round and round the soldiers. Everyone was praying. And from the balcony a friend—Mr. Bowdoin, now a member of the General Court—was trying to get a hearing.

"I give you," he shouted, purple-faced, hoarse, "—I give you stability and perpetuity to American Independence!"

And the welkin rang again.

They were showing their feelings indeed, these Puritan children of the pioneers.

After dinner they came back, to show them some more, but in a different way.

The State House looked upon King Street.

King Street, eh? Well, what more appropriate place to send to destruction royal arms and trappings, pictures and banners that were no longer of America? King Street had harbored bonfires before, when the stamps had gone up in smoke. It should harbor a bonfire now!

From the State House, that had been the Royal Town House, they took the royal arms. From every place where sign of former sovereign still showed, they took it down, and bore it thence with vim.

"Thus," wrote Abigail, next day, while the flames, real and spiritual, must still have glowed before her eyes, "ends royal authority in this State. And all the people shall say Amen."

CHAPTER XXV

DISAPPOINTMENT

THE chaise swung and bumped and swayed along the uneven road to Boston. Inside, the children sat round-eyed, staring at their mother, scared, in degrees according to their respective sizes and temperaments.

They were going to Boston to be inoculated against the smallpox.

Abigail smiled at them reassuringly, but something terribly like fear lurked in her own mind's background. It was nothing, she told them. If they were to take sick of the smallpox—the real smallpox—they might be very sick—they might even die; but this was not the real sickness; this would save them, make them safe from it if it should spread in the town. They must be good children, and brave, as their father wished, and she would tell him how proud he could be of them all.

Johnny Quincy was brave, his dark eyes earnest, though his sensitive nose might quiver just a trifle. He would be a soldier, he said, if he were a man—or a member of the Congress like his Papa. He would take the smallpox, and after he was through it, if his Mother would allow him, he would go to General Warren and ask if he could help his country. They said there was work now for even the smallest to do.

With what mixed feelings must Abigail have gazed into his eyes. If he were grown! Those soldiers of the north, ragged, starving, eaten with disease! The privations and perils of those here in the east; of those in the south, making ready for the fray, and menaced, doubly, by fire and sickness. Happily, those in New York were fairly free from the danger, through timely measures in their behalf. Here, in Massachusetts, the fear still dwelt—and struck, sometimes.

The children must not fall victims this time; and she must not, for they needed her; and John must not fear for them in the midst of all his worries. They would be inoculated as soon as they reached the town of Boston; and it would be over in a few days—the indisposition, and the danger, too, please God.

John must not worry. She did not know, indeed, how he found the time to ponder, and to urge on her his children's timely grounding in the arts, in letters, in observation. She must make it all, he said, as normal as she could; the time would only come this once. And he told her, what was truth, that all their children were possessed of vigor, understanding, spirit and fire to ascend the

heights of art, science, trade, war or politics. He stressed facility of writing. She must coach them in this—and he well knew she could.

He wrote to her now that his time was not his own from four in the morning till ten at night. The colonies were choosing their governments; the last straggling state conventions, New York among them, were coming to unanimity over Independence; Governors were being elected in place of royal authority. Archibald Bullock was elected Governor of Georgia; John Rutledge Governor of South Carolina; Patrick Henry Governor of Virginia; and Franklin's name was up for Governor of Pennsylvania.

As for American arms—the militia were on the march, from Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania—marching toward New York, where Washington lay, waiting; marching northward, others, to Crown Point, to bring relief to ravaged regiments up there.

John would come home, he said, as soon as he might. He yearned for a whiff of his native air. He dreaded a breakdown in health. More than ever he would have welcomed actual fighting —a hand in the fray—anything to relieve the overwhelming fatigue of governmental debates, ceaseless writing, talking, considering. He was tired.

He envied Elbridge Gerry, who was going home on leave. For himself, he could not go till a substitute for him was sent. But the Massachusetts Court must relieve him soon, for a time, at least.

Meanwhile he sent with Gerry, that amiable bachelor, good statesman and ardent dreamer, a canister of precious tea for Abigail, to cheer her in her enforced sickness. It comforted him to visualize her enjoying the tea he sent. . . .

By this time he had her report—a fair report all around. It had not been so bad as she had anticipated. In Boston, with the smallpox, as in Braintree with the deadly dysentery, she ran a fair-sized hospital of her own, since Betsey and her father, Mr. Adams' mother and the servants of each household were included in the precautions of necessity. A few had dizzy spells. A few had pain.

Some did not show the inflammation of the arm, and might have to be treated again.

John thought of his little family with love. Gerry had the name for being absent-minded, and might well be forgetful when his mind was fixed, as it was now, on getting home and on seeing the soldiers and all the preparations that were to be seen on the way there. It was to be hoped that he would not forget about Mrs. Adams' tea!

Meanwhile there was Lee's news of a victory at Charleston, South Carolina. John sent Abigail the Philadelphia newspapers with the published account of the engagement, and told her how much it was hoped that the armies in New York and at Ticonderoga would renew their courage in the warmth of the achievement, and that the thousands of new recruits needed would step into the breach for good, encouraged by it. Soldiers must be got, for love or money—though Mr. Adams still nursed hopes that it would be mainly for love! He was reluctant to lose confidence in his native Massachusetts, or to believe that the suddenly sluggish stream of recruits meant that it would be behindhand in the New York battle, any more than it had been in that of Boston.

The eyes of the waiting country were on Washington; on Howe; and on Staten Island, to which the finger of battle pointed. Through Philadelphia, each day, men in hundreds marched—their destination New Jersey and the main army. And alas! They were not all eager. Too many were discontented. Militiamen yearned openly for their time to be up—and laughed, with curses, at the suggestion of renewing it. . . . A fine army, said they, when no one could procure them blankets, shoes, hose, arms, food or shelter. A fine mess to set against the British!

So it was men wanted, from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, Jersey. The patriots were simply multitudinous. But those who would fight for their patriotism—till the thing proved a bit more certain, at least—were a mere handful now, comparatively.

August came, and went. And with it came, and passed, the flame of purgatory for the hard-gathered armies.

Abigail lay in Boston, weak from the inoculation and from watching over her brood. Little Charles had had to be treated once and once and once again, for the smallpox had not "taken." He recovered slowly, sick long after the others were well mending. But all were weak, and over all—all Boston, all the country—lay depression again, and dread.

The battle, that had flared at last on Long Island, was not going the patriots' way. . . .

The patriots' eyes strained anxiously eastward. They saw a Washington struggling against overwhelming odds. How could there be other than failure now—of arms, of hopes, of the whole glorious future mapped out by the Declaration? Six hundred men had fallen in the battle of Long Island. One thousand and odd had been taken prisoners. And America needed every man as she needed food and clothing. The flame of patriotism, John commented sadly, burned pure in all too few men's breasts; the affectation of it in all too many. Too many, he wrote, were grasping honor for themselves while affecting to be securing liberty and safety for others. And such is human nature that the disinterested and the unselfish, the heroic and the single-hearted, were the objects of suspicion. Of such was John Adams, wise in philosophy and the world's workings, but totally unable to understand how a man could put himself before his duty. Yet the little tongues had long since begun to whisper about him—his zeal, they smiled, was nothing but a seeking of high office. There was no one to be trusted. . . .

And before they smiled he had grown weary—weary of office; weary of the ceaseless struggle against odds in the Congress. Only his faith in America endured. She would win out somehow. A severe winter might do much. It might harass the British ships, lying in the exposed waters of New York, even more than it had beaten them last year; and it would certainly give the patriots precious time—for arms, for ships, for trade—and for experience. The

soldiers needed experience; the politicians even more so! And the little commonwealths of America still needed binding tighter together.

On one of Abigail's visits to Dedham, to spend an hour with Cousin Sam Adams' pleasant lady, and to try to ease her loneliness with sympathetic talk, she found Mrs. Samuel more than usually hopeful.

"Mr. Gerry was here," the other lady told Abigail, thankfully, "and brought good news. Sam will be on his way home in a week, on leave of absence."

Abigail congratulated her, and tried to stifle envy.

She knew—none better—what good news that was for Mrs. Samuel. Did they not both yearn for such news constantly, and live for those leaves of absence?

She smiled at Mrs. Samuel; then raised her brows as the servant brought a tray.

"Tea! My dear madam! I had thought never to see tea more. Where in fancy did you get it?"

"My sweetheart sent it," said Abigail's "sister delegate." "He requested Mr. Gerry to carry it to me, with his love—a canister of tea."

"And heyday, ma'am, 't was a gift of love indeed," cried Abigail, as she sipped delicious brew.

But if Mrs. Sam's sweetheart could send her a canister by Mr. Gerry, why could not Abigail's sweetheart have done likewise, especially since she had been so sick? Mr. Gerry had not even come near her.

Heyday indeed! And alackaday! For it was Abigail's own tea that she was drinking!

Delegate Gerry was well called absent-minded!

"Why—why—I carried it to Mr. Samuel Adams' lady!"

A cruel disappointment for John, weeks later in Philadelphia—John, who had day-dreamed unusually of his "Nabby's" delight in her tea.

And it was an expensive luxury, these days—far too expensive, if the truth were told, for a poor man's pocket.

All the same, Abigail should not go short of her tea simply because Gerry was absent-minded. Mr. Adams found the money somehow, and purchased another canister, and sent it this time, to be sure, by a more concentrating, less occupied carrier. And he urged Abigail to explain to Mrs. Sam, and rescue the remainder of the first tea if she could. For the grip of economy stung.

But Abigail should certainly have her tea!

CHAPTER XXVI

MAN-POWER

IT WAS at this period that Abigail first encountered a new menace—one, however, with which she was to become all too painfully familiar.

During a lull in John's letters, an acquaintance came hurrying to her in the utmost alarm.

"Oh, ma'am! Ma'am! Mr. Adams!"

It was enough. The chill hand of death—the fearful hand that held ever to the edge of her life, waiting to show itself—descended on Abigail's heart, and choked her breath.

"What—oh, Lord! What?"

"Ma'am—they say he was on his way home—at New York, they thought. They say he was—poisoned. . . . "

For a moment, darkness enveloped Abigail. Then, shaken, she asked where this news arose? How had it been obtained?

They were breathing it everywhere, her informant declared. None knew how it arose, but——

Then she would not believe! If she should believe every rumor, she would be dead herself, long since. . . .

But for nights afterwards she saw him in her dreams, she told him—laid out, dead; even after she knew that it was, indeed, a false rumor—the first of many such stories that were to be run to her.

He had, in truth, been at New York, however. A rather startling message had come from my Lord Howe—brother of the Howe that Boston knew. His Lordship was desirous of a half-hour with some of the members of the Congress in their private capacities!

For four days this had been the subject of debate, in its various aspects. At the end of them, by a majority, it was decided that "the Congress being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, it was improper to appoint any of their members to confer in their private characters with his Lordship. But they would appoint a committee of their body to wait on him, to know whether he had power to treat with Congress upon terms of peace, and to hear any propositions that his Lordship may think proper to make."

The committee was duly balloted for.

John Adams and Dr. Franklin, unanimously; and a third, by elimination—Mr. Rutledge.

The tired John had begged to be excused; they begged him to reconsider; they told him he should go. That settled it. Duty calling, once again! And incidentally the state of the army at New York might be looked into.

"Yesterday's post," wrote John, on his return, "brought me yours of August 29. The report you mention 'that I was poisoned upon my return home, at New York,' I suppose will be thought to be a prophecy delivered by the oracle, in mystic language, and meant, that I should be politically or morally poisoned by Lord Howe. But the prophecy shall be false."

Indeed, not much had come of the meeting. His Lordship had been grave, dignified, friendly, but very plainly not vested with full powers. He had told the committee that he was authorized to grant pardons to those who would submit, and to make to the Parliament a statement of American grievances, so that "if any errors had

crept in, his Majesty and his Majesty's ministry could rectify them." That was the extent of the proposition.

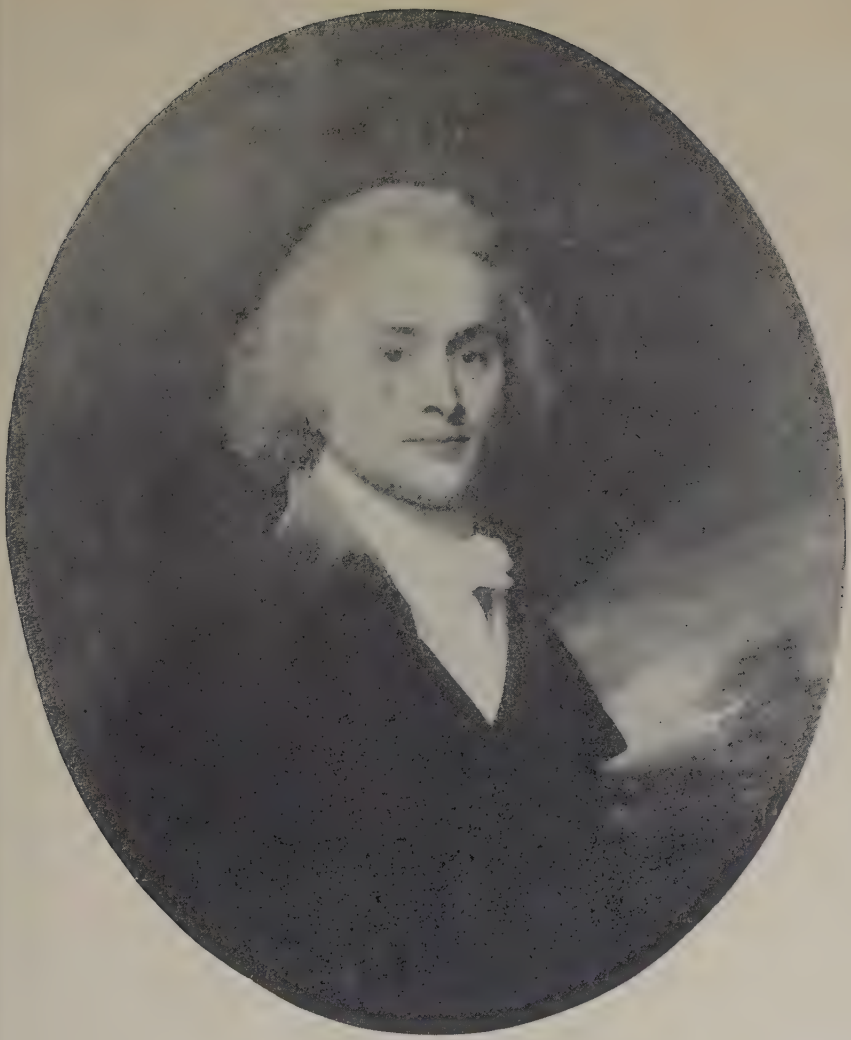
It had not been any advance towards a peaceful conclusion; but it might do the American cause no harm to have this opportunity of stating its case fairly. And John, at least, could enjoy stating his country's case to the representative of those who sought to put the onus of warmaking where it did not belong.

But he would sooner be riding home in fact—to rest, to forget, for a brief spell. They had not yet sent anyone from Watertown to replace him. Everyone, it seemed to him, was breaking faith with the Congress. The dearth of patriots who would go so far as to offer their military services for the new, free America grew daily more pressing. And what army there was seemed to have forgotten the band of men at Philadelphia, working for them as they were working for the country. Just as bad—the postal services were operating but fitfully. There seemed no coöperation anywhere.

"Unfaithfulness," wrote Mr. Adams to his wife, "in public stations is deeply criminal. But there is no encouragement to be faithful. Neither profit, nor honor, nor applause is acquired by faithfulness. But I know by what. There is too much corruption, even in this infant age of our republic. Virtue is not in fashion. Vice is not infamous."

They were offering gold, and a parcel of land, to every man who would enlist for the duration of the war. There was no plan that was not worth trying now, when constitutions were tottering, patriots falling out, new statesmen experimenting and failing with new state rulings, and a Washington slowly but surely being beaten back by red-clad forces, and crying ceaselessly for men, for arms, for stores, for clothes, for protection and support. He had retreated from Long Island and Governor's Island; and even now the post-riders were galloping with the news that New York was lost!

The army lay at Harlem, some eleven miles from the city of New York. And alas! Too many were a little more than ready to get up and run some more.



John Quincy Adams

COURTESY OF THE BOSTON MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
FROM THE PORTRAIT BY COPLEY

"Wherever the men of war have approached," John wrote in wrath, "our militia have most manfully turned their backs and run away, officers and men, like sturdy fellows; and their panics have sometimes seized the regular regiments."

And Abigail had something similar to say:

"If all America is to be ruined and undone by a pack of cowards and knaves, I wish to know it. Pitiable is the lot of their commander. Caesar's tenth legion never was forgiven. We are told for truth, that a regiment of Yorkers refused to quit the city; and that another regiment behaved like a pack of cowardly villains by quitting their posts. If they are unjustly censured, it is for want of proper intelligence. I am sorry to see a spirit so venal prevailing everywhere. When our men were drawn out for Canada, a very large bounty was given them; and now another call is made on us; no one will go without a large bounty, though only for two months, and each town seems to think its honor engaged in outbidding the others. The province pay is forty shillings. In addition to that, this town voted to make it up six pounds. They then drew out the persons most unlikely to go, and they are obliged to give three pounds to hire a man. Some pay the whole fine, ten pounds. Forty men are now drafted from this town. More than one-half, from sixteen to fifty, are now in the service. This method of conducting will create a general uneasiness in the Continental army. I hardly think you can be sensible how much we are thinned in this province."

But at least the men were going; and if some parts gave more men than others, why, the women must fall to and do their share.

"I believe I could gather corn," said Abigail, "and husk it; but I should make a poor figure at digging potatoes."

And meanwhile Braintree waited, with the rest of the country, for government; and the parish church was opened every Sunday, and every Sunday his Majesty the King was prayed for as usual.

Yet there was no king—or else there was no Congress!

Johnny Quincy came now to his mother with a request that followed a trend of many weeks' trickling. The men were nearly all gone. There was need of post-riders. The General himself had

told Johnny. And Johnny was nine years old, and could ride as well as a man—nearly. Indeed he wished he *were* a man! But they said he could carry the post between his town and Boston, if his mother would let him!

So he came to her, earnest, fiery, pleading, maybe taking a fold of her woolen working-gown in his hand, but not tugging at it as he had done when a baby, and eager likewise for favors. This was no babyish business.

Abigail smiled at him, and if he had expected her to temporize, or hesitate, or fear because he was such a little lad, and the ride between Braintree and Boston a longish one for legs so immature to urge a horse, he was pleasantly and gratifyingly surprised. Abigail's boys were men, for her, if the country thought they could do men's work; and Johnny's heart was stout enough to urge a lagging post-horse, if his little legs were not.

"You shall be a post-rider, John," she promised.

CHAPTER XXVII

VICTORY

"THE enemy have possession of Paulus hook and Bergen point," she read, " . . . places on the Jersey side of North river. By this time their force is so divided between Staten Island, Long Island, New York, Paulus hook and Bergen point, that I think they will do no great matter more this fall, unless the expiration of the term of enlistment of our army should disband it. If our new enlistment fill up for soldiers during the war, we shall do well enough. Everybody must encourage this.

"You are told that a regiment of Yorkers behaved ill, and it may be true; but I can tell you that several regiments of Massachusetts men behaved ill too. The spirit of venality you mention is the most dreadful and alarming enemy America has to oppose. It is as rapacious and insatiable as the grave. We are in the *faece Romuli non Republica Platonis*. This predominant avarice will ruin America, if she is ever ruined. If God Almighty does not

interpose by his grace to control this universal idolatry to the mammon of unrighteousness, we shall be given up to the chastisements of his judgments. I am ashamed of the age I live in."

He was tired, but he was coming home at last! For two months, at least, she would have him; the two longest winter months.

And he could rest, and be warmed again by her affection, and know, in that warmth, that he had never really lost his faith.

"I suppose your ladyship has been in the twitters for some time, because you have not received a letter by every post, as you used to do. But I am coming to make my apology in person. I yesterday asked and obtained leave of absence. It will take me till next Monday to get ready, to finish off a few remnants of public business, and to put my private affairs in proper order. On the 14th day of October I shall get away, perhaps. But I don't expect to reach home in less than a fortnight, perhaps not in three weeks, as I shall be obliged to make stops by the way. . . ."

No matter! He was coming, and it was enough. The small daughter could lie in wait by the roadside once more; and every day beyond that "fortnight" might be the day—the day of days.

It was strange that Abigail should not be utterly content, with her good man here beside her. It was strange that his homecoming, which she had pictured and anticipated and longed for in all the solitary vigils of her days and nights, should not, as ever, have banished the world outside, the war outside, and left her content, unthinking, unworrying, pacified.

The war was not outside.

It was here, on her doorstep; on everybody's doorstep. In everybody's heart. Domestic contentment could no longer banish it as a thing apart. It was a thing enveloping, permeating, ubiquitous.

Did they sit, of evenings, grouped round the December hearthside, with John reading to two attentive little boys and to the big and the little Abbies as they worked with their hands; or did they gather at the table for the day's main meal; it was always with ears

strained for the coming of the youthful post-rider—and the latest news. But would it be good news, when he dashed off his too-big horse and into the house with it? Alas! They were too often disappointed.

But a John at home was at least able to tell his wife many things, explain many things, which a John in Philadelphia had necessarily to leave unmentioned. She knew now, clearly, how the aims and ends of the patriots had changed, and why—through what processes the fight had changed from a struggle to preserve ancient rights into a struggle to establish new ones.

In the beginning, all that everybody had wanted was liberty, and that self-government that had always allowed the colonies to feel that the tie that bound them to the land of William and Mary and of James had been of silk; not of steel. King George had applied the cold of the steel, and tested its tautness; and the snapping had begun.

The foreign treaties committee had sent Silas Deane, Franklin and Lee to France. Through de Vergennes, the French foreign minister, these three had been given diplomatically to understand that if they came to King Louis XVI as Englishmen, he was not interested in their rights or their wrongs.

But with the foes of Englishmen, it might be different.

And meanwhile the British were hiring German soldiers, and propitiating the Indians, and besieging and burning cities that broke out against iron rule. Every day had made reconciliation more and more of a pipe-dream.

All this John told Abigail, confident that she could march with him on a line of thought that led to freedom in the future, not only for Americans who had been Englishmen in America, but for Englishmen in England and for the yet voiceless peoples the world over; for the British Tories were fighting as much to keep kings autocratic and native Englishmen rightless as they were to keep Americans submissive. Undoubtedly she saw it clearly—with greater clarity, of a truth, than that despotic King of France who,

with an ambitious hand half-outstretched to help Americans throw off tyranny, lost sight, in the glow of besting George, that he was besting Louis, too, and all that Louis stood for.

So Independence had been shouted, and Britain replied; but not in words any longer. The mouth of Hudson's River was choked with British men-of-war and British ships of every description, converted to war purposes. British transports had carried over an army of thirty thousand men, well equipped and well fed. The objective was New York; the ultimate aim the upper reaches of Hudson's River. If the British could command the river, the situation would be theirs. They could cut off communication between New England and Virginia, and, apart, these two hotbeds of Independence might be dealt with summarily.

As for Washington—he had twenty thousand men—or he had had, when he had started in the first flush of the country's patriotism. And most of these were better patriots than soldiers. Moreover, they had few arms, few stores of clothing, and still less food.

Already, Clinton and Percy, Howe and Cornwallis had shot out their long red arms to the eastward, and surprised Putnam in the rear at Jamaica. Already they had pursued Washington back across the East River and beaten his pitiful, overawed forces back, back across to Harlem, to White Plains and out, to New Jersey. And Washington's soldiers were thinning, by desertion or by capture, all along the way, till the holocaust came and three thousand continentals were taken, with arms and stores, in the siege and capture of Fort Washington, at the north end of the island of Manhattan, by Howe.

What tale could Johnny bring now, save of humiliation and disaster? His father knew well enough that Washington, of the brave heart and the unquenchable soul, would never surrender. What, then?

They waited for news, days, and evenings, too; and even to each other they would not confess that they knew they waited for the worst. . . .

It was a story of retreat unending—across New York, across New Jersey; across to the Pennsylvania shore. There, Washington had waited, taut, and wondering—wondering why Howe had not destroyed him and his American army once, twice, thrice over on the backward road—as he might have done at will, to his knowledge.

Howe was waiting, fatally, for the crucial moment.

"God send him mistaken still," said John Adams in his farmhouse, unable to sit, to read, to write, walking the floor between children and wife, hands locked behind him, wigged head bent downward to his portly waistcoat. "This march of his through the Jerseys seems a rash step to me. He brings himself further from help, and Washington nearer to it. There may yet come a moment when, if we take the opportunity while it offers, they may fall into our hands for good."

And Abigail, gazing at him, and beyond him at the despairing American army, cried "God send it! God send destruction to North and all his works."

Not a very Puritanical prayer! Further than ever, now, Abigail, from the merry girl whom a youthful John had been wont to tease for a faithful subject of a new young King. Her heart seemed to have frozen hard—to kings. . . .

Washington had fled across the Delaware, into Pennsylvania, in early December. It was late December now, and Howe still withheld the blow. Washington lay encamped, still feverishly begging for troops, for arms, for clothes—more clothes than the women who toiled, as Abigail toiled, at spinning-wheel and loom for them could give them.

"Ten more days," wrote George Washington to John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress, "will put an end to the existence of our army."

An end of existence—there were only six thousand left now. Yet Washington never thought of surrender. Deserters could have their way; men whose enlistment terms would expire with the month

might go; but Washington would never give in until vanquished.

At least he had the boatmen, and the boats along the river. The British might have established their "hornets' nest" at Newport, and think they held New England at bay; but honest New England watermen were here with Washington, and ready for whatever might come.

Thus, Johnny rode to Boston each day for the news, and brought it back, a-straddle on his big bay horse. And there was nothing to tell them that the news he brought one day in early January was different from the rest.

John caught him as he leapt to the ground; took from his cold hands the bundle of dispatches, and, his arm around the strangely tense boy, re-entered the house, leading Johnny to the fire for warmth. Then he slit an envelope open.

They watched his face change from ruddy health to surprise, to delight . . . to joy!

"Now God be praised," he cried—he shouted, and his square form actually danced with excitement. "God be praised. Washington has crossed the Delaware and has taken Trenton from the Hessians!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

ABROAD

SO Johnny Quincy, the reserved, bursting with uncommon glee, brought good news at last.

The town was mad with joy, he told them. The people were saying there would be soldiers enough now, and that those Hessians could not be such invincible ones as was everywhere said.

It was time—time for Americans to "cease fearing Hessians, and British, and war, and their own shadows," quoth John Adams.

But this day was for joy only. Washington had attacked—and

beaten. What did it matter that patriots had been tardy—that here in the Massachusetts, where the war had started, too many men still hung back, too many men who had gone out once had run back again at the roar of a gun? George Washington and a handful of red-blooded soldiers had struggled across an ice-caked river and taken the dreaded hired Germans by surprise.

The story was told and retold, read and re-read—of Washington, wanting men, wanting food, wanting clothes and guns and stores, but unvanquished; of Knox, in command of the artillery, bellowing encouragement as the ice-conquering scows, in the hands of those fishermen of Marblehead, crossed over; of the youthful Alexander Hamilton of West India, whose brilliance had made him Washington's military secretary, and whose appeals and persuasions had done so much to help.

"Men," Washington had said, and the messengers were telling how the tight-lipped face of the self-contained commander, that had never broken into a smile all through the victories at Dorchester and Boston, glowed on the men in this hour of probable extermination, with a beaming fire of hope, "we have been dismayed; we have been o'erwhelmed; and if we rest here, we shall be, in all likelihood, exterminated. Your officers have voted to strike back, rather than be stricken. There is a chance of victory, and no certainty of loss. I am ready to lead you. We start today, at two of the clock. . . . "

He had managed to bring them hope again, and to make them forget their gaping shirts and their hungry mouths. He had led them across the ice to victory at Trenton, in the chill of the morning, through hail and wind and cold that might well strike dismay into their hearts—had, indeed, stricken it into the hearts of some others; for the sustaining officers who were to cross further down the river had bowed before the inevitable when they saw the high-packed ice. But not Washington; or Hamilton; or Knox. . . .

Or Sullivan. It had been Sullivan, under Washington, whose soldiers had fired the first shots, that had hunted the German

Colonel Rall from his bed and spurred the German Lieutenant Piel to alarm and action. It had been Alexander Hamilton who had placed the guns at the cross-roads in the town, and swept it with irresistible fire.

Down by the Assunpink River, that morning, a white flag had waved. Down by the river the Hessians had flung their arms, and a dying Rall had given up his sword to Washington.

"Victory," said Abigail. "Now at last our people will rally. It is the beginning of a different end from that we feared to think of."

But it was not all. John read on, awestruck at the overwhelming gratification of still further success for the torn, tattered army. With more than a thousand prisoners, it seemed, Washington had held Trenton, keeping communication with his camp across the river, till the second of January, when General Cornwallis marched down on him and surrounded the town—or thought to. . . .

Cornwallis had waited till darkness lifted, to finish his work. But in the morning Cornwallis' swift survey had discovered—nothing. Just empty earthworks. No Americans. Nothing. Washington had worked in darkness once more, and was already along the road, gathering in three hundred more British prisoners, who had been on the way to aid Cornwallis. Gathering in their arms and ammunition, too.

The little children could giggle with John—it was nice to see their papa laugh so—and their mother also, though she cried as she laughed.

Thank God! Now victory was surely here—if only the people would see. . . .

Mr. Adams left that week for the Congress, which hoped to make the people see. But he did not go to Philadelphia. He went, this time, to Baltimore, whither the Congress had fled from an enemy worse than Britain.

There was yellow fever, raging, in Philadelphia.

He was gone again, and it seemed as though he had not returned, or that the brief happy hour had turned a knife in a wound, for the loss was so much keener. She felt desolately alone, despite her children and her ever-mounting duties.

Her farm was flourishing. John had said, indeed, that he was jealous of her prowess in that way! But for herself—she was jealous only of Sam Adams, who might ride to Baltimore with John. And of all those wives, British and American, who were following the course of battle with their husbands.

He wrote to her from Dedham. He was feeling the parting as poignantly as she—almost. How could it be quite as poignantly? He rode abroad and faced a world of crisis and duty to humanity. She was left at the scene of parting, to put away his books and his belongings—the only signs that he had really come and gone.

"My good genius," he wrote, "my guardian angel, whispers me, that we shall see happier days, and that I shall live to enjoy the felicities of domestic life with her, whom my heart esteems above all earthly blessings."

And meanwhile he rode from town to town, village to village, and with keen vision that was to be sharpened by each new journey, saw the people and their lives, the places and their potentialities. And Abigail shared vicariously, through his letters, in his travels, and the children and the neighbors in town shared in them through her. News was their amusement, and it was indeed a groaning board of intelligence that Abigail could bid them to, as John Adams rode to and from his duties.

From Hartford he wrote her, held back by the cold a while. Good news, though—General Washington had gained another considerable victory at Stony Brook, in the Jerseys, and General Putnam another at Burlington; and yet a third had been won by the militiamen of Jersey. It was confirmation of that which she read in her Boston papers, brought by Johnny each day. Washington, they said, had captured or shot down at least two thousand of the British since Christmas. John could tell her that the General's letters

verified this, and remind her of his own prophecy that Mr. Howe would live to regret his march through the Jerseys.

"But how much more so would it have been thought, if the Americans could all have viewed it in that light, and exerted themselves, as they might and ought. The whole flock would infallibly have been taken in the net."

He wrote her from Fishkill, "after a march like that of Hannibal over the Alps." Thence through Farmington, Southington, Waterbury, Woodbury, New Milford and New Fairfield he and Sam had ridden, their travel and food and housing costing them little—a small compensation to balance the dreadfulness of the ride. The sanguine, hopeful attitude of the inhabitants of farms and cottages by the way did drive out to some extent the unkind memories of terror and discontent ravaging his native Massachusetts. They were meeting, everywhere, now, with anticipation, not of the worst, but of the best. It was hard to figure Massachusetts—only Massachusetts—sunk, for the time being, at least, into a stupor of depression; but so it was.

He wrote her from Poughkeepsie, a picturesque, colorful Dutch village, "the brittle ice in Hudson's River" forcing them up as far as that. They had crossed on the ice from Poughkeepsie, over to New Marlborough, and thence had ridden by Newborough and New Windsor to Bethlehem—a prosperous town of Moravians, with fine public gardens, a remarkable system of water supply, and industrial and social developments and customs amazing to John.

He wrote to her from Easton, across the Delaware—another Dutch town, with a thriving community of Dutch Jews in its midst, and Lutherans and Calvinists sharing a meeting-house in a general atmosphere of religious toleration.

He wrote to her from Baltimore, the long and arduous journey, entertaining as it had been, most gratifyingly over.

"Baltimore is a very pretty town, situated on Patapsco river, which empties itself into the great bay of Chesapeake. The inhabitants are all good Whigs,

having some time ago banished all the Tories from among them. The streets are very dirty and miry, but everything else is agreeable, except the monstrous prices of things. We cannot get a horse kept under a guinea a week."

And as John rode on to the Congress, Abigail was struggling with prices of food, with the problem of the children's education, and with her own increasing horror at the rarity and the evanescence of the quality of patriotism among her people.

The army lay at Morristown, along the road from Peekskill—Washington's little army. And Cornwallis' greater force was at New Brunswick. But the news that had met the delegates at Baltimore was at least heartening. The continental army was filling up—from Maryland and from Virginia. Would Massachusetts now follow suit? Massachusetts! It seemed so far away. John had crossed four rivers since he parted with his Abigail.

How much further, then, did Baltimore seem from Braintree!

Mrs. Adams plunged into her work, and into local affairs, with redoubled vigor.

She had, it seems, become a stateswoman now in truth. Her town had put her on a committee of patriot ladies commissioned "to examine the ladies of the Tory persuasion" in Boston.*

Not that there lacked examination, complication enough on the farm. Prices were outrageous; times were growing ever harder.

Worse—certain merchants had been guilty of hoarding; coffee in particular. On one such niggard, the women of the town marched down and demanded the keys of his storehouse. He refused them. . . .

Who would have guessed, cried John Adams when he heard of it, that there were Amazons in Braintree?

They seized the unhappy shopman by his neck, and tossed him

* Unfortunately, not much more than the bare fact of her appointment, mentioned at the end of one of her letters, is available. It is not to be doubted, however, that she accepted with alacrity; and served with equal zest.

to a cart they had in the road. He surrendered. They took his keys, they tipped him out into the roadway, they fought him while they dealt with his wares. Out they dragged the coffee. Onto the trucks they had brought, they loaded it; and took it forthwith to the market, so that all might have a fair share.

With sugar there had been like doings. And some had said that the men had looked on, and enjoyed the sight.

"You have made me merry with the female frolic with the miser," wrote John. "But I hope the females will leave off their attachment to coffee. I assure you the best families in this place have left off, in a great measure, the use of West India goods. We must bring ourselves to live upon the produce of our own country. . . . What would I give for some of your cider? Milk has become the breakfast of many of the wealthiest and genteelest families here."

But Boston, and the countryside by Boston, was hardly thinking of food just now. Nobody knew where Britain would strike next. Burgoyne was in the north; St. Leger, too. But Howe?

The noble forts of the upper Hudson, by Tappan's Bay, which John had seen and admired on his recent journey, protected communication between the protesting colonies. They would hold any ships at bay and keep the Hudson, at this point, and above it, clear; and while the upper Hudson remained clear, the States would not be divided by physical force.

But what of Howe? . . .

Once more the alarm came flying along the road by Abigail's house. A fleet—a mighty fleet—Howe's fleet, off Cape Ann!

And Boston was in chaos yet again!

It seemed there would be no remaining soul this time, to suffer under duress. Everywhere people were packing up and loading onto carts and trucks and all descriptions of vehicle their treasures, their stores, their clothes.

And for Abigail, just rising, it happened, from a sickbed again —would it be "fly to the woods," after all, with her children?

All day long the teams dragged their heavy loads past her house. All day long the people poured out of Boston to possible sanctuary elsewhere. And Mrs. Adams packed and stored and hid away goods like the rest; and sent Isaac with a great load of Mr. Adams' prized library of books to such of her friends more removed from the town as might keep them safer than she.

She was feeling most terribly depressed—totally unable, in her weakness, to face this terror of probable flight and affliction. Her mind, indeed, seemed suddenly to recoil from thought at all—thought of moving, of fleeing, of, it might be, extinction.

Nor was flight made easy for refugees. Patriotism, succor, it seemed, were marketable commodities—and, indeed, highly profitable ones. The carters were raising their prices hourly. A thousand teams had been employed in two days. A roaring trade could have been done, with the charge as little as might be. But "roaring" was not enough! Eight dollars for a small trunk; and around a hundred dollars for a load of goods. One friend had a hogshead of molasses carted eight miles, and they made her pay thirty dollars before they would take it.

"O human nature!" Thus Abigail—"or rather inhuman nature! what art thou?"

And what of the harvest, that had promised so well? She stood behind the house, in the orchard, and could see all about her the fields, her own and others', rich in corn and flax and English grain. Was it to go down now by fire and wanton destruction? If she were spared to come through this new purgatory, would it be but to return here to barren fields, empty barns, a desolate homestead —or charred ruins? Her mind, she wrote to John, seemed to swoon with weakness of body and with an overwhelming dread.

But Howe was not at the gates of Boston at all. It was nothing but one more false alarm. And with its dissipation a new alarm invaded Abigail's being. If not at Boston—where? Congress had returned to Philadelphia—but was Philadelphia's danger over with the passing of the pestilence?

"Don't be anxious for me," wrote John. "If Howe comes here, I shall run away, I suppose, with the rest. We are too brittle ware, you know, to stand the dashing of balls and bombs. I wonder upon what principle the Roman senatores refused to fly from the Gauls, and determined to sit with their ivory staves and hoary beards, in the porticoes of their houses, until the enemy entered the city and, although they confessed they resembled the gods, put them to the sword. I should not choose to indulge this sort of dignity; but I confess I feel myself so much injured by these barbarian Britons that I have a strong inclination to meet them in the field. . . . It is too late in life, my constitution is too much debilitated by speculation, and indeed, it is too late a period in the war for me to think of girding on a sword. But if I had the last four years to run over again, I certainly would."

He was forty-two years old.

CHAPTER XXIX

DEPRIVATION

HER letters were all Abigail had—but the letters were, at least, peculiarly, particularly John Adams.

"I think I have sometimes observed to you in conversation that upon examining the biography of illustrious men, you will generally find some female about them, in the relation of mother or wife or sister, to whose instigation a great part of their merit is to be ascribed. You will find a curious example of this in the case of Aspasia, the wife of Pericles. She was a woman of the greatest beauty and the first genius. She taught him, it is said, his refined maxims of policy, his lofty imperial eloquence, nay, even composed the speeches on which so great a share of his reputation was founded. The best men in Athens frequented her house and brought their wives to receive lessons from her of economy and right deportment. Socrates himself was her pupil in eloquence, and gives her the honor of that funeral oration, which he delivers in the Menexenus of Plato. Aristophanes, indeed, abuses this famous lady, but Socrates does her honor.

"I wish some of our great men had such wives. By the account in your

last letter, it seems the women in Boston begin to think themselves able to serve their country. What a pity it is, that our generals in the northern districts had not Aspasias to their wives! I believe the two Howes have not very great women for wives. If they had, we should suffer more from their exertions than we do. This is our good fortune. A woman of good sense would not let her husband spend five weeks at sea in such a season of the year. A smart wife would have put Howe in possession of Philadelphia a long time ago."

It was three years since he had ridden to Philadelphia first—three years which, he told her whimsically, he often felt inclined to describe in a history after the manner of Thucydides, for that there was a striking resemblance in some things between the Peloponnesian war and this.

"The real motive to the former was a jealousy of the growing power of Athens by sea and land. The genuine motive to the latter was a similar jealousy of the growing power of America. The true causes which incite to war are seldom professed or acknowledged. . . .

"Not a word yet from Howe's fleet. The most general suspicion now is that it is gone to Charleston, South Carolina. But it is a wild supposition. It may be right, however, for he is a wild General."

But the Southern rumors passed, and now shame was to show its head in the North.

The British planned their triple attack, which was to concentrate on the upper Hudson at Albany. Burgoyne, in Canada, was ordered to bear southward; St. Leger was to come by way of Ontario and the Mohawk; and Howe, according to plans, would open up the Hudson by capturing the upper fortifications.

It was a fortunate strategy—for the Americans. Had the entire combined forces of all three advanced together to do what Howe alone was supposed to do, nothing in America could have stopped them.

As it was—Ticonderoga, surely, would deal with Burgoyne!

Burgoyne marched southward, with four thousand British, three

thousand Hessians, and a small force each of Canadians and Indians.

And Ticonderoga fell.

Ticonderoga! The key to New York and the upper Hudson! The key, it might well be, to America!

"I dare say," wrote Abigail, "before this time you have interpreted the Northern Storm. If the presages chilled your blood, how must you be frozen and stiffened at the disgrace brought upon our arms! unless some warmer passion seize you, and anger and resentment fire your breast. How are all our vast magazines of cannon, powder, arms, clothing, provision, medicine, &c., to be restored to us? But, what is vastly more, how shall the disgrace be wiped away? How shall our lost honor be retrieved? The reports with regard to that fortress are very vague and uncertain. Some write from thence, that there was not force sufficient to defend it. Others say it might have stood a long siege. Some there are, who ought to know why and wherefore we have given away a place of such importance.

"That the inquiry will be made, I make no doubt, and, if cowardice, guilt, deceit, are found upon any one, howsoever high or exalted his station, may shame, reproach, infamy, hatred and the execrations of the public, be his portion.

"I would not be so narrow-minded as to suppose that there are not many men of all nations, possessed of honor, virtue, and integrity; yet it is to be lamented that we have not men among ourselves, sufficiently qualified for war, to take upon them the most important command."

But John wrote back rather more hopefully, if a trifle bitter. Gates would surely be afforded such reinforcement as to stop Burgoyne from coming any further. St. Clair's evacuation of Ticonderoga would be the last of its kind, and he would face court-martial.

The hopes were justified. General Schuyler put his bold spoke in the wheel of the British advance. Men were coming in at last—from New England; from New York, and from the north.

General Stark took his thousand Hessian prisoners at Bennington. And Burgoyne began to be anxious, for where were the other component parts of the British attack? Where, indeed! St. Leger had been forsaken by his Indians at the approach of General Bene-

dict Arnold's army, and had fled back into Canada. And Howe, when the expected instructions did not arrive from Lord George Germain, the British War Minister, had taken himself and his fleet and his army to Chesapeake Bay—a voyage of six weeks—and was obviously facing a march by land of sixty miles or so to Congress' city.

"If Congress had deliberated and debated a month, they could not have concerted a plan for Mr. Howe more to our advantage, than that which he has adopted," John opined. "He gives us an opportunity of exerting the strength of all the middle States against him, while New York and New England are destroying Burgoyne. Now is the time!"

Washington sent his plan to the Congress.

"Tomorrow morning, at seven o'clock, I shall march my army through the city of Philadelphia, along Front street, and turn up Chestnut street to cross the bridge at Schuylkill river."

A thrill for the weary men of the Congress! The Continental army, large at last—near ten miles long, with their wagons and artillery—was to march through Philadelphia! Pinpricks for the timorous who would be patriotic; goads for the Quakers in their peaceful smugness; scourges for the Tories who were scourging their own!

John had been writing of the country's sore need of money, which Robert Morris was working nobly to appease. He begged Abigail to manage to pay what taxes might be set to her, even if she had to sell her books and her belongings to do it. These were taxes that patriots should pay. But he, too, wrote ruefully of prices:

" . . . . Four pounds a week for board, besides finding your own washing, shaving, candles, liquors, pipes, tobacco, wood, etc. Thirty shillings a week for a servant. It ought to be thirty shillings for a gentleman and four pounds for the servant, because he generally eats twice as much and makes twice as much trouble. Shoes, five dollars a pair. Salt, twenty-seven dollars a

bushel. Butter, ten shillings a pound. Punch, twenty shillings a bowl. All the old women and young children are gone down to the Jersey shore to make salt. Salt water is boiling all round the coast, and I hope it will increase. For it is nothing but heedlessness and shiftlessness that prevents us from making salt enough for a supply. But necessity will bring us to it. As to sugar, molasses, rum, etc., we must leave them off. Whiskey is used here instead of rum, and I don't see but it is just as good. Of this the wheat and rye countries can easily distill enough for the use of the country. If I could get cider I would be content."

Necessity did "bring them to it." From salt the people turned to using their mills to make molasses out of cornstalks, for distilling, or for boiling down for sugar. What they could provide for themselves they provided; what they could not provide, they did without. John said he was breakfasting on milk, and liked it.

No coffee! And of course no tea, even though it was allowed if you could afford it! Well, the women must, of course, cook up some brew or other to cheer themselves of evenings. Abigail tried thoroughwort, and sage, and even currant leaves. And it was quite *comme il faut* to brew "Liberty tea" from the lowly loose-strife.

Moreover, there was still something in the canister John had sent from Philadelphia—but she hated to finish it!

She was in her fields all day now, gathering the good year's bountiful corn, and husking it, as she had vowed she would, while Johnny rode the post, and Charles, and even little Tommy, tried to help with the potato-digging; young Abby with the house and the cooking and the mending. Nearly all the men were gone by now. Abigail's brother, and John's brother, also, were soldiers. But women must work, not weep.

She was still a farmer's wife. Criticized by the people, John had improved his leave of absence to resign the office of Chief Justice of Massachusetts, before he had ever sat on the bench. No one should dub him office-seeker, if he could help it. When he came back—if he came back—he would be a farmer, a husband, a father, he said, and be satisfied.

And Abigail a farmer's wife, and the children a farmer's brood. They worked in the fields, while Washington marched with his soldiers into Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XXX

RETREAT

IT was an ominous dawn, wrote John of Washington's march through Philadelphia.

It had rained all night. It had thundered, and lightning had struck the vane of the Quaker almshouse near where Mr. Adams lodged. It had rained again in the morning; so that they feared the parade would be damped both physically and spiritually.

But it cleared; and at seven the advance guard of the American army entered the town.

They marched twelve deep—four grand divisions, four regiments of light horse, and the artillery with their matrosses. Southern soldiers, all of these. New England, New York were with Gates above the Hudson. Four southern states had given their men to Washington, and ten thousand militiamen would join them later.

Into Philadelphia the soldiers marched, and through it, to settle between it and Howe.

John Adams watched them pass. His diary reveals how moved he was at the sight.

In the cool and peace of the church, when it was over, he prayed with the Rev. Duffield's overflowing congregation—for success for the ragged army that had lately gone by. For these Continental soldiers were not resplendent, save in cause. Their footwear gaped; their shirts and small-clothes too. Some wore regimentals; some homespuns, ill-assorted. Brown linen hunting-shirts adorned the neatest among them. But they had borrowed leafy boughs from

the trees along the way; and their horses—such as remained—were sleek and glossy. And down along the ranks there was another splash of color—a flag, of red and white and blue, with thirteen stars to it.

Also, their faces, as they marched, if thin from hunger, were brown and beaming. Their eyes were fixed ahead—on Washington, whose high cocked hat was bending to right and left to meet the hand at the salute.

There were many in Philadelphia who were hoarse that night.

"There is such a mixture of the sublime and the beautiful together with the useful in military discipline," wrote John to Abigail, reflectively, "that I wonder every officer we have is not charmed with it. Much remains yet to be done. Our soldiers have not yet quite the air of soldiers. They don't step exactly in time. They don't hold up their heads quite erect, nor turn out their toes so exactly as they ought. They don't all of them cock their hats, and such as do, don't all wear them the same way.

"A disciplinarian has affixed to him commonly the ideas of cruelty, severity, tyranny, &c. But if I were an officer, I am convinced I should be the most decisive disciplinarian in the army. I am convinced there is no other effective way of indulging benevolence, humanity, and the tender social passions in an army. There is no other way of preserving the health and spirits of the men. There is no other way of making them active and skilful in war; no other way of guarding an army against destruction by surprises, and no other method of giving them confidence in one another, or making them stand by one another in the hour of battle. Discipline in the army is like the laws in civil society. There can be no liberty in a commonwealth where the laws are not revered, and most sacredly observed, nor can there be happiness or safety in an army for a single hour where the discipline is not observed.

"Obedience is the only thing wanting now for our salvation. Obedience to the laws in the States, and obedience to officers in the army."

Two weeks passed, and the little post-rider brought a letter.

A letter from Philadelphia. But not from John.

That was not John's writing. The signature that franked it said "James Lovell"! Lovell was a Massachusetts friend, and a fellow-delegate of John's. What was James Lovell writing to her for?

The too familiar visions rushed in on her brain. John was sick—dying. He had died already; it was too late for aught but sorrow. . . .

She picked up the letter. But open it she could not! She put it down again. Mercy Warren and her husband, James, coming to visit on the way home from Watertown to Plymouth, found her distracted.

She handed to Mercy the letter from Lovell; then snatched it back from her. She must not transfer to Mercy any burden of ill news. She must open it herself!

She broke the seal, but still she could not bring herself to read.

Her eyes dropped, avoiding the body of the letter, to the bottom line, which told her absolutely nothing.

". . . I have the honor to be, Madam. . . ."

How was she going to raise her eyes?

Her hands shook, so that the letter fell apart. Two papers. There was an enclosure. She would look at that.

It was a map of the country around Philadelphia, as far as Chesapeake Bay.

John had told her how much he wished he had time to describe to her the lay of the land around, so that she could visualize and comprehend the campaign. Lovell, to whom John frequently showed choice parts of Abigail's letters, had heard such a wish from him also, it seemed, and had thought it might be a pleasant courtesy were he, Lovell, to favor such an admirable lady with a plan of the country, since Mr. Adams was too occupied with his committees to find the time himself. That was all.

The letter was kind and polite—compliments to accompany a graceful action.

When Mercy and James, her guests, had retired that night, Abigail sat down to write to her absent husband.

" . . . . There is no reward this side the grave that would be a temptation to me to undergo the agitation and distress I was thrown into by receiv-

ing a letter in his handwriting, franked by him. It seems almost impossible, that the human mind could take in, in so small a space of time, so many ideas as rushed upon mine in the space of a moment. I cannot describe to you what I felt. . . . Good night, friend of my heart, companion of my youth, husband, and lover. Angels watch thy repose!"

She was trying to live as John advised her—eschewing foreign articles, even sugar, and making at home such articles as she could; conserving on dress and in every way. Washington, John wrote her, had banished wine from his military table, and was entertaining his friends on rum and water, and it was a gesture that every citizen could follow in his or her own way.

The Tories were starting a war on money, and circulating counterfeit bills to defeat the national currency, such as it was.

"They think they have taken such measures that it cannot hold its credit longer than this campaign," wrote John, "but they are mistaken."

Economy! Economy! That would foil them!

But meanwhile it was agony, waiting for Washington, who lay with his army at Wilmington, to strike. Or for Gates, at Peekskill with the men of Massachusetts and New York, watching for a sadly harrowed Burgoyne.

"The officers drink a long and moderate war. My toast is, a short and violent war," cried the impatient John Adams. "They would call me mad and rash, &c., but I know better. I am as cool as any of them, and cooler too, for my mind is not inflamed with fear nor anger, whereas, I believe theirs are with both. If this letter should be intercepted and published, it would do as much good as another did two years ago."

But, short and violent, or long and moderate, bloody war was upon them again.

Arms clashed at last, at Brandywine. And Howe's army, victorious there, swept on, with Washington before them in retreat.

Cornwallis came by way of the Delaware, and Wayne went down before him likewise.

Washington lay just across the Schuylkill, holding the ford and the boats. How long could he hold them?

Mr. Adams was abed when they came to call him.

"You must rise, sir, and make ready with all possible speed. There is a letter from Mr. Hamilton. The enemy is in possession of the ford over the river now, and of the boats also. They will be in this town, we are warned, before morning!"

Downstairs John found Marchant, of Rhode Island, and found, also, that the rest of his colleagues had already left the town. So the two took their papers, and mounted, and rode away in the wake of the Congress, to Trenton, to Easton, to Bethlehem, to Reading, to Lancaster and across the Susquehanna River to Yorktown, where the Congress settled, anxious not to depart from Pennsylvania, but taking a circuitous route in order to bring the records hither in safety. John lodged, with Sam Adams and Elbridge Gerry, in the house of General Roberdeau, and wrote at once to reassure his wife on the loss of Philadelphia.

Howe was going to have his hands full, John assured her, holding on to Philadelphia. But at least it would keep him out of other mischief.

And perhaps the small ones of America would now be convinced of the reality of their danger, and of the causes of it, and would rise to the occasion as they had not risen before.

In any case, the patriots could console themselves. Howe's was but a fraction of the enemy machine.

And north of New York that other fraction, Burgoyne's, was providing Howe with an object-lesson that would not make him feel any the more secure. For north of New York Burgoyne's army was slowly being reduced to minimum and to despair.

CHAPTER XXXI

GLORY

THERE was no need for Johnny to ride. It seemed that Massachusetts burst apart and blazed with glory suddenly.

Burgoyne and all his army had fallen, at Saratoga!

The hesitant Gates had not hesitated this time. He had swooped, prompt with terms as generous, forsooth, as those he would have hoped for had the positions been reversed and he been suing in capitulation to the British warrior-playwright who once had lyricized "The Boston Blockade."

"He can write 'The Blockade of Saratoga' now," said Abigail in one of her letters.

Gates, with the inestimable help of Schuyler and Benedict Arnold, among others, had vindicated himself, and won his little hour of glory.

Months later, when another and a greater capitulation was taking place, the defeated army, to cheer itself, played on its fifes "The World Turned Upside Down." The tune would have formed apt theme for Abigail's joyous thoughts at this time. A world turned upside down indeed, for American arms! Washington, the hero, idolized and rare—where was he? At Germantown, by Philadelphia, driven out of there. Gates, the weakling, who had let Burgoyne this far—Gates had triumphed and taken Burgoyne and guns and men for good, in total surrender.

Of the North herself, how could Abigail but rejoice? It was New England men—New Yorkers—Northerners all, who had dealt this master-blow at British arms. And the Southerners lay with Washington, baffled. The tide of popular acclaim had long been with Virginia and the South in such a clamor as to drown out those who had fought for Boston. Now, Massachusetts could rejoice once more.

Mrs. Adams could not stay on her farm that day, working calmly.

She took the twelve-year-old Abby—a budding young lady, who loved to embroider and to read and to write, and to gossip with cousins Lucy and Betsey Cranch and little girl-friends—and they rode to town, to take part in the general thanksgiving.

But the war was not over yet.

George III. in London, was not satisfied. The rebels must suffer some more. They must be punished. They must learn!

CHAPTER XXXII

WELCOME AND FAREWELL

"THIS day, dearest of friends, completes thirteen years since we were solemnly united in wedlock. Three years of the time we have been cruelly separated. I have, patiently as I could, endured it, with the belief that you were serving your country, and rendering your fellow-creatures essential benefits. May future generations rise up and call you blessed, and the present behave worthy of the blessings you are laboring to secure to them, and I shall have less reason to regret the deprivation of my own particular felicity.

"Adieu, dearest of friends, adieu."

Thirteen years! The years were fleeting, and she could so ill afford those that deprived her of him, though afford them she must and would till need or chance of his service to his country was past.

He had said he would come home, if he could, very soon. Howe was penned up in Philadelphia, and seemed to be in a trap. And Green and Smith and Hazelwood, at the head of their respective troops, were raising the country's hopes in Jersey. The patriotic spirit flowed now—fluctuating, to be sure, according to success or setback; but flowing more surely than at any time in this war for independence.

Prices, however, continued to rise. Congress could not meet the need for money, but was frantically issuing paper money that represented ever more desperate financial straits, and was looking towards France with strained eyes and anxious minds. Each day that brought no news of a treaty brought anxiety instead. Would Franklin and his fellows succeed, or must others go to support them? And who could be counted on to bring them strength—the strength of an alert mind and a staunch purpose?

The army needed blankets and shoes, and ammunition. The country needed money. America needed France—and waited.

John Adams felt that his work was over. He had helped with all his might to win for his country that which he believed was its right; he had helped gain for his country a fairly adequate army.

And now let others carry on the burden, and let him aid his country by tilling the earth and conserving the products thereof; by prosecuting the law and upholding it. It was enough. He was a poor man. He had a family to keep. He must ply his chosen profession and his chosen labors.

He resigned.

So, though they had been parted on the thirteenth anniversary of their union—

"I celebrated the 25th of this month in my own mind and heart much more than I shall the 30th,* because I think the first a more fortunate day than the last——"

—they met soon after, and were able once more, for that moment of meeting, to forget the rigors of the past in the rejoicing of reunion.

But the present would not eclipse itself, and before long the future was to swoop down like a black cloud, and become, itself, the present. . . .

The war? The war was going well enough, said John at his own

* The 30th was his birthday.

fireside, his children gathered round him, his smiling wife at his side. Uncle Norton Quincy, of the mansion by the water, was there, and Uncle Tufts from Boston, and John's old friend and brother-in-law—Judge Richard Cranch now—and his wife, Abigail's sister Mary; and Betsey Shaw, who had been little Betsey Smith, with her new clergyman husband; and John's aged, doting mother; and the grieving Weymouth parson, John's father-in-law. They wanted news from Yorktown, and also to show their respect for this one of them whose honor it had been to work for America's freedom.

With gratitude for the opportunity, John Adams returned, in relief and relaxation, to his ancient profession, the law.

But not for long!

He was at Portsmouth, pleading a cause in admiralty, when a letter was handed to him by an express.

It was a communication from the Congress—an official, bulky document, bearing the seal and the frank of the President, John Hancock, and signed by Richard Henry Lee and James Lovell, as a special committee.

The letter informed Mr. John Adams that he was appointed commissioner at the court of France; wished him a speedy and safe voyage; but advised him to put weights in his dispatch bags, so that he could sink them quickly if his ship were seized!

It was this news that he had to tell to Abigail, when he rode for home.

He must leave her again—to go to France.

To France! A world away! And British ships patrolled the ocean.

Neither of them thought of refusal. Pride would come later—was waiting, already, for dismay to subside. But dismay could not drive out necessity for these two—the necessity, dire, of their country. If their country needed John to go to France, he would go, of course—but dismay must have its hour. Franklin needed support. Deane had proved unequal to the diplomatic necessities of the situ-

ation, and would be recalled. Someone of sturdier fiber must replace him; and John Adams had been chosen. America needed France. A treaty by which France would come to America's aid was an urgent necessity, and must not be delayed if another patriot could speed it.

There was no question of refusal.

But, happily, there would be many weeks of preparation. The frigate *Boston,* which John had helped, as head of the war committee and sponsor of the navy, to commission from the Congress, would take him to France. She must be fitted out for the voyage, armed and prepared against possible—nay, probable, with such coveted cargo as a prominent member of the rebel Government aboard—attack by enemy ships. And John himself must make his preparations, and digest his instructions.

Abigail and her daughter must have surpassed themselves in weaving and mending and sewing and making in those weeks! And it was not only for John that they fashioned new supplies and fortified articles already in use.

He could not go alone. Abigail surely could not bear the thought of that. He must not go unsupported, uncomforted by any of his own family for God knew how many months. With all her heart she desired to accompany him herself; but she might not desert her household and her little ones, and the children could not all be taken along.

Not all. But Johnny should go! Johnny should go with his father, and be a companion to him and a comfort, and a help, if necessary. Johnny might be only ten, but he was a man already, and a brave one. He would be proud to go—indeed, he was pleading to—and she would take the parting from him as only a part of that great parting with the one she loved best of all.

So Johnny went too, and was a proud and gratified youth.

And when they were more than two weeks on the ocean, those came to Abigail once more who had so often brought to her false tidings of John's violent death by here or there.

And they told her that Benjamin Franklin, the senior member of the Paris commission, of which her husband had now become a part, had been stabbed to death in Paris, by an assassin. . . .

CHAPTER XXXIII

SEA BATTLE

JOHN had taken his leave of Abigail—and who shall say what silent prayers and speeches, what talismans of hope and faith, passed between them as they embraced for the thousandth time and more?

He was leaving all he loved behind—or nearly all. He was cutting himself and Johnny away, like a living heart, from his "dearest friend."

Abigail had kissed her eldest son, and bade him be a brave fellow, and guard his father, and profit by his journey.

She did not go with them to Uncle Quincy's, where it had been arranged they were to wait for Captain Tucker, of the *Boston,* to send a barge for them. Their partings had ever taken place better in the privacy of their home. So she stayed back and watched them go from her, giving him time to gather himself together.

"We will send a message from Uncle Quincy's," said John to his companion, doubtless coughing a little from an embarrassment that lay not really in his throat, but in his heart. They would be riding down the road in Uncle Quincy's chaise, with the baggage distributed about and before them; both staring ahead; both, man and boy, striving to choke back the tears and the overwhelming feeling of loss.

It was a short ride, mercifully, and a short wait. Twenty minutes had barely elapsed from their arrival at Norton Quincy's house, where wishes and gifts and hospitality waited to speed them both,

when a knock came at the door, and Captain Tucker was there himself—a seafaring boss from the tips of his boots to the tip of the brim of his black cocked hat—with a midshipman, to bear his illustrious passenger out to the ship that lay in their view in the harbor waters.

We can see little Johnny gravely returning the salute, and taking the Captain's hand, as John had done. John scribbled a message to Abigail, to be carried back by Uncle Norton.

"Send my duty to my Mamma." Thus Johnny, unabashed by the presence of the sailors, and missing his mother and his brothers and sister already more than he could bear. "And my love to Abby and Charles and Tom."

"It is done." The older John's letters are authority for the conversation. "And I have said, further, that Johnny is behaving like a man."

Presently they were rowed out to the ship, and went aboard her. She was a noble little frigate, and Sam Tucker was to guide her through many a triumphant sea-fight. With her aid he was to capture many welcome prizes, but he was to lose her at last, to a British squadron at Charleston—lose his ship and his heart for sailing, too, and retire to a farm in his old age. John knew Tucker well. He had lodged in Fleet Street in Boston, and Sam Adams had sponsored him and his commission. John could trust himself and Johnny to Samuel Tucker's skillful seamanship.

But this was a voyage, of all his voyages, that needed all Sam's skill. . . .

The British fleet was neither unaware nor idle. British ships were within sight, and keenly interested. A member of the Congress aboard the *Boston,* that little frigate? After her!

John sat at the window in his cabin and saw the British ships coming for the *Boston* and for him. There had been a heavy gale since they set out, but the wind was dying now.

"The guns are all out." Thus, Johnny, pale but brave, and talking to make himself the braver. "Will Captain Tucker fight, sir?"

"If he and his officers listen to me, they will." This from John, grimly. "He says his orders are to carry me to France, and to take any prizes that may fall in his way; so he thinks it his duty to avoid fighting, especially with an unequal force."

"Then they will take us, Papa?"

"No, my son—they'll not take us without a fight, I can promise you that. The Captain assured me that if he cannot avoid an engagement, he'll give them something to remember him by. I have begged him to encourage the officers and men to fight to the last extremity."

But he did not tell the boy all that was in his heart. He knew well enough that it would be better for him to be killed here aboard the ship, or to go down with her, than to be taken prisoner. . . . He gazed out of the little window in the stern. There was but one ship chasing them, but she seemed to be coming fast, gaining speedily on them as they lay rolling in the calm, prepared for battle now. Powder, cartridges, balls lay ready beside the guns, and the men were ready behind them. . . .

But nature arose once again, jealous, it seemed, of the petty designs of men at war. If the British ship was not to destroy them, it seemed that the hurricane which now descended on them would, and that right speedily.

The clouds banked up; the wind rose; the ship, sails spread, began to fly before it. The enemy was forgotten in this new tribulation. . . .

The frigate rolled and pitched and agonized. All around were sailors "retching and spitting gorge and profanity," pitching over and against each other, totally unable to keep their legs. Chests, casks, bottles were smashing, every cabin and hold was flooded.

The Captain regretfully told John, on the second day, that there was considerable danger for the safety of the ship. It was uncertain whether they could bring her through such a hurricane.

John began to experience, he tells us, not fear, but remorse and repentance at having brought his son along. . . .

But Johnny had pleaded so; and they had all said it would be a fine thing for father and son both, if he should be allowed to go. Poor Johnny! To go—whither?

The little boy was both brave and proud, however. He would endure what his father must endure, and his father must not worry over him.

"I am in the way of duty, Johnny. I do not repent of my voyage. But I repent of bringing you, my son, and placing you thus, exposed to danger."

"Do not repent of it." He was an earnest, self-controlled boy. "I will make it my duty, also, Papa, if God spares us. I will help you and I will be a good companion to you, and I will bear what you have to bear, and be proud if I can comfort you."

At night it was the worst.

The thunder roared and boomed above like all the cannon of the heavenly forces massed in wrath against the quarreling of man. One awful night a thunderbolt struck the mainmast, and felled three men on deck, and came near to destroying the Captain himself.

The storm died.

Another arose. Thus the log of the *Boston:*

"Saw a ship to the southeast standing to the westward. Asked the favor of the Hon. John Adams to chase, which was immediately granted. Made sail and gave chase. At 3 p.m. came up with the chase, gave her a gun and she returned me three, one shot of which carried away my mizzen yard. She immediately struck. Out boat. Got the prisoners on board. She proved the ship 'Martha' from London, bound to New York. I ordered a prize-master on board, intending to send her to France, but on consulting Mr. Adams, he thought most advisable to send her to America."

And Mr. Adams "happened" to be on the quarter-deck as his vessel presented her broadside and prevailed; "happened" to be standing there, noting that the enemy ship was a "letter of marque, with fourteen guns," and fondling the while a musket in his hands,

like any one of the marines about him! The ball that struck the mizzen yard struck directly above his head. He found himself without room for excitement over the fact, filled already with the thrill of being actually in a sea-fight—with a musket in his hands.

The *Boston* swung around, with menacing broadside.

The enemy struck.

"Cease fire!" cried Tucker, from the quarter-deck. Cronies now, these two, Adams and Tucker, in a sea-fight.

" 'T is prudent," said John. "There is no need for more." But he felt absurdly regretful that it was over so soon.

Tucker seemed suddenly to realize the identity and the importance of his passenger.

"Why are you here, sir?" he bellowed (according to a memoir of John's). "I have bidden you go below a dozen times in the hour. Why are you here? I am commanded by the Continental Congress to carry you in safety to Europe, and by thunder I will do it!"

And he swooped down on the stupefied Mr. Adams and, seizing his bulk by main force, rushed him from the deck and below stairs, where they found a little boy in shirt and small-clothes, speechless and hot with excitement, craning his neck at a cabin-window.

Not his first battle, this young John Quincy Adams—but his first sea-battle, and a victory.

The weeks passed. Storms rose, and died. Ships were sighted, and disappeared beyond the horizon line.

And they came, at last, to the shores of France, while at home in Braintree, a lone Abigail feared for them, and prayed for them, and did not even know whether they survived.

CHAPTER XXXIV

LONELINESS

THERE was a song which Abigail would coax the little Charles to sing to her. Her wheel would cease its humming for a while, and doubtless there would be a soft mistiness about her dark eyes familiar to both little boys. Small Abby at this time had gone on a lengthy visit to the Warrens at Plymouth, and her absence was keenly felt.

"Sing to me," then, Abigail would say to Charles, "sing the lovely Scotch song the young lady sang the other day, that Mamma taught you. Sing it, my son."

We can picture a little boy thrusting out his dangling legs and slipping from a rail-backed farmhouse chair. We can see the little Charles as he stands silhouetted in the firelight, his brown hair neatly tied behind, his little form more youthful for the simple farmer's frock upon it. He liked to sing for his mother, and comfort her. Also he liked brother Tommy's admiration and glee when he sang.

> "His very foot has music in 't," sang Charles,
> "As he comes up the stairs."

Mention of the song, in a letter, and of the sentimental effect it had on Abigail, gives us yet another key to the reverse side of that stoic mood in which she endured the many partings with her husband and the many trials she was called upon to face.

> "And shall I see his face again?" sang Charles,
> "And shall I hear him speak?"

Abigail confesses that the words of the song stirred her to tears, that the mention of a longed-for foot upon the stair could shake her out of her determined calm.

She poured out some of her loneliness to John. But sometimes, alas, it was the waves that received her letters! Many of his were lost in the same way. And it was December, and he would not come home as he had done each year he had been away. December—and he had gone from her in February! Through that February, through March, April, May, and almost through June, she had gone, anguished, without a single written word from him; though false news had not, to be sure, been absent! The *Boston* had been taken, this one came hurrying to tell her. It had been captured and carried into Plymouth. And so on, and so on.

But for truth—silence! She could learn nothing, till the day came, at last, that told her that her fears for him could rest.

She tried to be patient; yet her heart would flutter at the news of every ship's arrival into port. Her mind was roving in quest of John. Where was he—in France, as safe as might be, or taken elsewhere? She put her faith anew in a divine and kindly Being, and sought through Him tranquillity by day, and rest by night; and thus gained strength to disbelieve rumor.

Johnny she missed always—yearned for him even while she rejoiced that now, at last, he might enjoy that paternal counsel which he had lacked through nearly all his tender years. She wrote to him separately, of her soaring hopes for him, of her belief that he would grow up a wise and honorable man, of her despair should he ever disappoint her.

Stern letters, hardly revealing the soft and brooding love that burned for the ten-year-old in his mother's heart; but they came from a woman who was making stupendous sacrifices for her country, and would strive further to render the sacrifices a profit and not a loss.

At last the good news came—and presently (at last!) they brought her letters superscribed in well-loved hands.

If she had some heedless friends, she had very many good ones; she knew how many now. They kept her informed, accompanied, diverted, whenever they could.

From Mr. Lovell she learned of the Congress' doings. Britain, after Saratoga, had offered terms which might, in other days, have been seized with gladness. Not now! Now, it was too late—too late for aught save independence—separation from that erstwhile parent once fond and wise but now, forsooth, so tragically callous.

A poverty-struck America had begged for aid, for sustenance, from France. England offered conciliation—after Boston, after Saratoga! But France now offered men and food and money—to an independent America.

Too late now for any answer but "Yes" to France; "No" to England. Too late, by a score of battles, a hundred unanswered pleas, and a thousand sacrifices.

Between Franklin's plea and John Adams' arrival, England's prudent advances had spurred the King of France. To Boston harbor now came the Comte d'Estaing, with ships and men and money—a fleet, well-manned and laden.

Abigail was writing her letters to John and to Johnny, bidding her son to view with horror the crimes of war, and to stamp upon his youthful brain the truth that a country's—nay a community's and an individual's—prosperity depended upon moral uprightness. She had never traveled abroad, but she knew that travel molded the mind and formed the viewpoint. It could never fail to do so with a child so impressionable as Johnny, brought up amid the alarms of war. She knew her little son so thoroughly—his hasty passions, his pride, his responsiveness to sympathy, his chill resistance to that which he considered unjust. So her letters to him were more of strong counsel than of all the soft tenderness she felt.

But to John, her husband, her letters were all tenderness.

She knew now that Franklin was safe, and John, happily, as well. The Comte d'Estaing had sent her a message on his arrival in Boston waters, begging her to meet him at her uncle's house, as he could not leave his ship for long. Abigail hastened there, rejoiced to speak with one who had seen her husband so much more recently than she. She found the Comte both charming and polite,

entrusted with messages from John and from the *"jeune homme tres gentil"* who was Johnny.

He invited her to dine with him on board his ship, with any friends she chose to bring. He would send his barge for her.

Now human nature showed puzzling in the extreme. Boston was being strangely apathetic toward the gallant men of the French army and fleet in Boston waters. General Hancock had entertained them, being home with his family; General Heath, also; but very few others. Abigail tried to make amends, for her own sake as much as for theirs. John was among the French now, and the more time she spent with them, the more at peace she would feel. She took her daughter and her two young sons to the midday feast on board the flagship, and ate of once familiar but now novel delicacies from her own country, and of tidbits from the land of her hosts. There was music on board, played by the strange and elegantly-uniformed French sailors; and there was dancing for the younger folks, on deck. It was a red-letter outing both for Abigail and for the children.

She asked the Comte and his officers, and others who visited the ship to meet her, to honor her in return with their company whenever it might be convenient. They took her at her word, and returned her visit, not once, but many times. The officers from the *Languedoc,* the *Zara* and their sister ships would drop in on her, in fact, often before she had finished breakfast. Sometimes one or two would spend the day, dining and supping; or perhaps they would carry her and one or all of her children off to a ship for dinner and sumptuous entertainment. It was all delightful to Abigail—to air her French, to laugh at their broken English; to talk of John and of France and of America, of Howe and of Clinton and of the war.

To talk of John! She was receiving hardly any letters. She was wondering with her nerves, if not with her whole mind, whether it were possible that he would forget her. . . . Two small letters—mere notes—had come in months! . . .

And her nerves, finally, would not let her curb reproaches—regrets for letters which, had she known it—though it might not greatly have comforted her had she done so—were gone to the bottom of the sea, or fallen into enemy hands.

And had she known it, he was as badly off as she, and as empty.

CHAPTER XXXV

MISUNDERSTANDING

HE had sent her packages—chests of supplies and necessities which she was finding it harder and harder to obtain at home—a roll of black cloth that her father needed; some sugar; some flour; some good cider. And he was begging her—for he knew well how hard pressed she would be, and how anxious to make ends meet—to draw bills on him for money, which she did.

But it was letters, letters she wanted from him, more than food, or money, or supplies.

And he had written much—of his safe arrival at Benjamin Franklin's temporary home, so congenial to the pleasant philosopher, at Passy; of the friendly reception he had met with; of the apparently universal opinion in France that a friendship between that country and America was to the interest of both countries; of the elegances and beauties of France; of the charm of the French women.

She got *that* letter—about the women!

"Monsieur Chaumont has just informed me of a vessel bound to Boston, but I am reduced to such a moment of time that I can only inform you that I am well, and enclose a few lines from Johnny to let you know that he is so. I have ordered the things you desired to be sent you, but will not yet say by what conveyance, for fear of accidents.

"If human nature could be made happy by anything that can please the

eye, the ear, the taste, or any other sense, or passion, or fancy, this country would be the region for happiness. But if my country were at peace, I should be happier among the rocks and shades of Penn's hill; and would cheerfully exchange all the elegance, magnificence, and sublimity of Europe for the simplicity of Braintree and Weymouth.

"To tell you the truth, I admire the ladies here. Don't be jealous. They are handsome, and very well educated. Their accomplishments are exceedingly brilliant, and their knowledge of letters and arts exceeds that of the English ladies, I believe.

"Tell Mrs. Warren that I shall write her a letter, as she desired, and let her know some of my reflections in this country. My venerable colleague enjoys a privilege here, that is much to be envied. Being seventy years of age, the ladies not only allow him to embrace them as often as he pleases, but they are perpetually embracing him. I told him, yesterday, I would write this to America. . . ."

To which she replied, not, assuredly, without a smile,

"You must console me in your absence, by a recital of all your adventures; though, methinks, I would not have them in all respects too similar to those related of your venerable colleague, whose Mentor-like appearance, age, and philosophy must certainly lead the politico-scientific ladies of France to suppose they are embracing the god of wisdom in a human form; but I, who own that I never yet 'wished an angel, whom I loved a man,' shall be full as content if those divine honors are omitted. The whole heart of my friend is in the bosom of his partner. More than half a score of years have so riveted it there, that the fabric which contains it must crumble into dust, ere the particles can be separated. I can hear of the brilliant accomplishments of any of my sex with pleasure, and rejoice in that liberality of sentiment which acknowledges them. At the same time, I regret the trifling, narrow, contracted education of the females of my own country. . . ."

It was true. Some man had said, recently, that if woman was to be esteemed man's enemy, she should at least be allowed equal weapons with him. Female learning had always been held up to ridicule in the colonies. It was time to alter all that.

But where were John's letters? He could tell her that Prussia was spoiling for a war—for an invasion of France; that Ireland was vastly restless and seemed likely to rise in insurrection at any moment. . . .

Where were Abigail's letters? She could tell him of Clinton's army, of Howe's fleet; that the treaty with France had been duly ratified; whether the Congress had disposed of him, John, and ordered him elsewhere—since he had arrived when that which he had been commissioned to effect was already practically a *fait accompli.*

"In the very few lines I have received from you," wrote Abigail with a bursting heart, "not the least mention is made that you have ever received a line from me. I have not been so parsimonious as my friend—perhaps I am not so prudent, but I cannot take my pen, with my heart overflowing, and not give utterance to some of the abundance which is in it. Could you, after a thousand fears and anxieties, long expectation, and painful suspense, be satisfied with my telling you, that I was well, that I wished you were with me, that my daughter sent her duty, that I had ordered some articles for you, which I hoped would arrive, &c., &c. By Heaven, if you could, you have changed hearts with some frozen Laplander, or made a voyage to a region that has chilled every drop of your blood; but I will restrain a pen already, I fear, too rash, nor shall it tell you how much I have suffered from this appearance of—inattention. . . ."

Could this be Abigail?

And he, poor John, writing so faithfully—letters for the waves to gloat over; for enemy eyes to read! He had sent presents to her by two ships that had been seized; he had gratified a request for necessities from brother Cranch, and that had been lost, too, the ships taken and sent, they learnt later, to the Channel Isles. He had told her how nicely Johnny was progressing at the Passy school, near where they lodged, and what a young man he was become, and how he revered the precepts of his mother.

The French were treating John in a manner beyond complaint. His American colleagues——

But there things were not so smooth. As it turned out, with the treaty settled, there was nothing for him to do, at this time, in the way of foreign relations. But of diplomatic work among his colleagues he found a crying need. And, being John Adams, he did not avoid it.

His colleagues were squabbling among themselves like a nestful of young sparrows over a worm. There were stories of Deane's and Bancroft's speculations in British stocks, and in trade, and in fitting out privateers. But in worse state than all this were the financial affairs of the commission, that was here to represent a new, struggling country sadly in need of funds. There was no sign of a minute-book; no record of letters; no attempt, evidently, at keeping accounts. But it was more than easy to grasp that expenditure had been "prodigious"; nor could he follow it the whole way along all its winding roads.

This state of things appalled him. He had had no experience in affairs of finance, or in the executive, as far as records went. But there was need here, and he rose aggressively to meet it. Nothing could be done while the factions were split up. Nothing could be done unless the confidence of de Vergennes should be permanently fixed. While de Vergennes saw the squabbling, and sided with the mature, easy-going Franklin, as he did, against a Lee who did not appear wholly unselfish in his efforts, there was no hope of permanent confidence from France.

John could not do very much, however, along these lines, beyond steering a steady course for himself, and refusing to side with any interest beyond that of his country. But he could, and did, regardless of feelings, clean house as far as finances went.

Moreover, there seemed to be a superfluity of commissioners. John wrote to his cousin Samuel, in the Congress, urging set salaries, a checking of accounts, and a reduction of the Parisian personnel. By this act he was in every likelihood reducing himself out of the service; but that, we may be sure, did not worry him. And he achieved his object, which was the reform of conditions which he believed outrageous.

He was, moreover, utilizing his unfamiliar leisure time in studying France; and England, too; and Holland. His sentiments towards the first were friendly and hopeful. An alliance with France he felt to be essential. And yet, he wrote to Abigail,

"It is a delicate and dangerous connection. . . . There may be danger that too much will be demanded of us. There is danger that the people and their representatives may have too much timidity in their conduct towards this power, and that your ministers here may have too much diffidence of themselves and too much complaisance for the court. There is danger that French councils and emissaries and correspondents may have too much influence in our deliberations. I hope that this court may not interfere by attaching themselves to persons, parties, or measures in America. . . ."

He wanted an alliance as deeply as anybody at this time,

"*provided* always that we preserve prudence and resolution enough to receive implicitly no advice whatever, but to judge always for ourselves. . . ."

His plea for prudence was to be justified before very long.

Meanwhile—he must chafe at receiving no word from home—from the Congress, instructing him; from Abigail, save reproaches. And her reproaches, so unjustified, did not add to his felicity. He was a little angry with her.

"For heaven's sake, my dear, don't indulge a thought that it is possible for me to neglect or forget all that is dear to me in this world. It is impossible for me to write as I did in America. What should I write? It is not safe to write anything that one is not willing should go into all the newspapers of the world. I know not by whom to write. I never know what conveyance is safe. Vessels may have arrived without letters from me. I am five hundred miles from Bordeaux, and not much less distant from Nantes. I know nothing of many vessels that go from the seaports, and if I knew of all, there are some that I should not trust. Notwithstanding this, I have written to you not much less than fifty letters. I am astonished that you have received no more. . . . I sent large packets of letters and papers for Congress, for you, and for many friends. God knows I don't spend my time in idleness, or in gazing at curiosities. I never wrote more letters, however empty they may have been. . . ."

He felt sore and hurt, even though he knew the cause of misunderstanding. He had heard from Sam Adams only once; from Gerry not at all; from Lovell twice or, at most, thrice. Franklin was

getting letters from John Adams' friends, and Adams was not; and vice versa, doubtless. A freak of chance brought him safely most of James Warren's correspondence, but he did not know but that Warren was blaming him for not answering, though he had written often.

He was getting more news from England than from home, he told his wife. The King's speech from the throne had betrayed fear —of Spain joining against them; of Holland's sentiments towards the new America. Perhaps to the now hopeful John it betrayed more fears than it indeed contained.

But time would tell.

And meanwhile he longed to be home.

"I cannot eat pensions and sinecures," he wrote. "They would stick in my throat."

This with a genial philosopher, well-pleased with Paris and de Vergennes and life in general, urging him to mark time and rest on his laurels likewise! But there were no laurels for the outspoken John Adams to rest on at that moment.

Worse, Abigail's letters continued, when they came at all, sad and complaining. He could not bear it. She must not write thus, he told her when he was least agitated by her anger, her grief and her melancholy, all so unlike his Abigail; or he would leave off writing entirely. It killed him. Did she doubt his love?

And so on. Both overwrought. Both understanding, if the truth were known. Both letting anger out as a safety-valve to bridge the awful silences.

But she did not reproach him any more, or ask assurance of a devotion which she had never really doubted.

His joy was Johnny, he told her, that model boy, copying his father's letters for him, helping by every art he knew. Johnny liked France, but he wanted to come home. He enjoyed the sights they saw—the millions of candles lit in the streets in honor of the birth

of a princess, Maria Theresa Charlotte; the gayety of Franklin's parties; the kind patronage of the ladies and gentlemen. Incidentally his father, while enjoying the sights also, and appreciating the courtesies, could not see millions of candles lit in the streets without thinking of his countrymen, who might be needing candles, bread, the necessities of life!

The news from England continued encouraging enough. Keppel had refused to go out and fight against the Americans—though it was true he had accepted a command against the French. And it was said that already more British men-of-war had been taken than Britain had lost in two former wars, and more sailors also. Carlisle, Cornwallis and Eden had returned from America, but were strangely silent. The cry of "Peace with America. War with France!" had already been heard in the streets of London. And the Parliament did nothing but threaten.

The English papers, meanwhile, were making mincemeat of John Adams—chopping up so much of him, he said, as was left after his colleagues in France, of one party or the other, had finished with him. The English papers called him fanatic, bigot, hard-hearted attorney, cunning, of no character, of awkward figure and uncouth dress. They sought to make real mischief by saying he hated the Parisians. But some of his colleagues did worse. They made it a crime to be unpartisan. They discredited him at home and impeded him abroad.

Oh, well, at least Abigail did not reproach him longer, though he was in truth, and from a wholesome fear for the consequences of stolen letters, writing to her less than ever. He felt, not without reason, that spies surrounded him personally—English spies, and spies set by merchants and by politicians also. Not only his life, he realized, was now in danger, but his reputation and his character also.

"I can pass for a fool," wrote John to Abigail, "but I will not pass for a dishonest or a mercenary man. Be upon your guard, therefore. I must be upon mine, and I will. . . ."

Silas Deane was publishing pamphlets about him in America, discrediting him; discrediting Franklin also, and Lee. And meanwhile Paris was a hotbed of American politics, the merchants, stockjobbers, all the self-seekers working for personal gain, country with but a small place in their councils.

And at home, little Tommy, who had parted from him as unconcernedly "as though he had no father," was inquiring concernedly where Papa was. And Charles was hotly reproaching sister Abby for not showing more grief.

And sister Abby, flushing with emotion and outrage, so Abigail wrote to John, had looked on Charles with withering scorn.

"I don't *talk* much!" she had said, quietly; and silenced the teasing brother. John commended her for it, in a letter. Hers were tactics after his own heart.

His babies had not forgotten him. His Abigail yearned for him in all the stresses of her life. For it was hard beyond effort for her to make ends meet now. Food and grain were prohibitive. If she wanted help on the farm, she must pay six to eight dollars a day for a man. If she wanted to buy a cow, it cost sixty pounds, no less; and everything in the way of import was almost impossibly high. Linen now cost twenty dollars a yard; calico, thirty and forty; broadcloth, forty pounds. So, what with fear and anxiety, financial pressure and distress, and an ever-present eagerness to come out thriftily on the right side of the balance, her thoughts might well have strayed sometimes from John and even from her Maker. They did not stray. She prayed—for John's safety and for her own guidance.

Her friends told her that John was to go to Holland as ambassador. But Congress had sent him no such orders. Congress seemed to have forgotten him. His suggestion for a single minister to France had been adopted. Franklin was the choice—an obvious choice. Lee had departed, already, on a commission to Spain. But John Adams, apparently, might kick his heels till doomsday.

He wanted to come home; he decided that if Congress had no business for him, he *would* come home, and they would move again to the house in Boston, and he would "draw writs and deeds, and harangue juries, and be happy." He liked Paris, the people and the climate and the food, the entertainment and the philosophy. He had wandered a little about the surrounding country, as far afield as Nantes, l'Orient and Brest. . . .

And at last, tired of wandering and of waiting for orders that never came, he put to sea and sailed for home. The King of France had graciously offered him a cabin on his Majesty's frigate *Sensible,* in company with his Majesty's new Ambassador to America, the Chevalier de la Luzerne, and with Johnny, and the servant, Stevens, who had accompanied them from the farm. Johnny had given him no hour of anxiety, for health, for vigor, for vivacity or any other cause. He had been good-humored always, had easily imbibed French, and had grown tremendously in general knowledge of the world's affairs and of the arts and social sciences. And now all his other joys awaited John Adams the farmer and lawyer, the husband and father.

Seven weeks' sailing.

And then Abigail clasped in her arms once again that longed-for husband. And for one more time they forgot the past and the future in the blessed present.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SEPARATION

AUGUST, September, October! Indian Summer of sweetest felicity in a Massachusetts farmstead. But the outside world would not keep outside, and they would not thrust it out, if they could.

The new America was going through a bitter purgatory, with

"patriots" still skulking at home because Congress could not offer them anything but well-nigh worthless paper.

Through snow and ice and zero weather, Washington and his ragged, hungry army, driven from Germantown, had lain at Valley Forge. There, at least, the spirit had prevailed. It was fortunate that the British, running the war from across the ocean, could not comprehend that only the loss of Washington could kill the spirit of the American army. It was well for Washington that the enemy leaders lacked the vision to join and concentrate on him, or history would have gone another way.

Von Steuben came, to oil the wheels of the military machine and instil into the army that discipline and war order which John Adams had long ago recommended.

With Howe recalled to England, Clinton, the new commander-in-chief of the British forces, had evacuated Philadelphia, persuaded by the menace of the Comte d'Estaing's French fleet. Washington, supported by the young la Fayette and the brilliant Hamilton, led his bedraggled army in pursuit, toward New York—only to be foiled, and driven, unusually, into spoken rage by the vacillation of one of his own Generals, Charles Lee.

And with a transfer of British naval and military activity to the southward came a holocaust unparalleled so far, when South Carolina, despite the noble fighting of General Lincoln's army, fell into the enemy's hands.

Not pleasant news for the Congress, which had ever numbered in its ranks the timid. Not pleasant news for a diplomat on holiday —a patriot who never allowed his patriotism a vacation.

Indeed John Adams himself was not getting much vacation. Immediately on his return he had been chosen a delegate from his own town to a convention charged with the preparation of a constitution of the State of Massachusetts. They hardly allowed him time to essay once more the rôle of private citizen, the tending of his farm, the guidance of his household, or the steering of the ship of home finance; let alone his legal office. But the work on the con-

stitution was work very near to his heart, and he entered into it with sufficient zest.

And just when the zest was highest, and bearing the most fruit, and happiness at being in touch once again with all he held dear settling down into an even flow of contentment—out he was ripped again from that peaceful setting.

November saw Abigail lonely once more—triply lonely. November saw John on the high seas anew, with not only Johnny now, but Charles as well! His destination, as before, was France, where Franklin still marked time—and where de Vergennes, more interested in crippling England than in sustaining America, showed no sign of any particular desire that the war should terminate. John had been in France, the first time, just sufficiently long to suspect that de Vergennes' good purposes ran on a single track; and for Vergennes to grasp the fact that Adams was no Franklin. . . . Their second meeting could hardly be as cordial and unsuspicious as the first; and the popular Franklin could hardly be as glad, this time, to welcome one who might shake him out of his agreeable passive enjoyment of the Parisian life.*

To be sure, the Congress did not follow John Adams along these lines. The good faith and integrity, both of the French people and of the French government, were matters of common and grateful acceptance. John Adams happened to be one of very few who suspected that the French people's cordiality, sincere enough, might flow from motives apart from those which prompted the powerful support of the French government. John's commission from the Congress this time was a response to a hint from Gérard, the first French minister to America, that England seemed almost ready to treat for peace. If the war was to be over, de Vergennes wanted a hand in the making of the peace. Through Gérard, he urged that not too great demands be made by the representatives of the Con-

* A study of John Adams' Works, which include his diary and a quantity of correspondence, affords more than a little ground for belief that Franklin was not merely biding his time, but was enjoying the Parisian life in his old age, and resented being shaken out of his placid *milieu*.

gress in the formation of the terms of peace. The demands that might be made by France, later, were to him France's own business.

So John Adams went charged only with securing the recognition of the United States as an independent nation, as far as the peace treaty went; but separately he was commissioned to close a commercial treaty with Great Britain that should secure to New England the lost right to the fisheries of the northeast coast, and to the west the navigation of the Mississippi. It had been New England, really, that had sent John to France at this critical moment. New York had wished for Jay to go, and other states had destined John Adams for the Spanish court. But New England was solid for its fishery rights, and John Adams was obviously the person to secure them, if anyone could. By their power, the New Englanders had prevailed. So Jay went to Madrid; and Adams to treat with England, via France. . . .

Abigail was alone once more, and desolate. Yet she had made Johnny go, this second time, against his own will. He would have rather stayed at home with her, and pursued his studies at Harvard College. He had had enough of travel. . . . But he had derived so much from his first voyage; and she liked to think of him as his father's aid, and under his father's care. She had urged him to go, against her own inner urgings. And dear little Charles, of the sweet voice and the chubby face, whom everybody loved—Charles had been eager. He longed to show he was a man at ten, like Johnny. Mr. Thaxter, the boy's tutor, was to accompany them, and Mr. Richard Dana, also destined for European courts.

But when they had gone she could not make her spirits rise. She wanted to start up and go to Boston, whence they would sail. They might not have found opportunity to get away yet. She might obtain a further word with John. But she knew well enough that he had, indeed, already left Uncle Tufts' in Boston. Aunt Tufts had, he wrote her from there, had the last kiss, and had given him a barrel of cranberries to feast upon. He bade Abigail keep up, and

hope, as he hoped, for happiness again. He was going reluctant, aware of the delicacy and the pitfalls of his mission; but of resolute faith, as always; and she must be the same.

She was determined that she would. She would not harry him with sorrows nowadays, and add to his woes. She would not reproach him for not writing letters that he had indeed written for the sea to gorge.

But she was lonely! Only her daughter, rising fourteen, and a woman, could dimly understand, and, "not talking much," try to aid by actions.

This winter was worse than the last. "The sublimest winter," said Abigail, that she ever saw. They could not get out for the snow that was banked about their doors; ships could not make the harbor for the ice that choked the Bay. But at least it was healthy weather when the snow stopped, and before the thaw set in. They would, and did, make the best of that; and had ample time for doing so!

Meanwhile she poured out her heart, as ever, on paper—to Johnny, to Charles—to John.

"These are times," she wrote to Johnny, "in which a genius would wish to live. It is not in the still calm of life, or the repose of a pacific station, that great characters are formed. Would Cicero have shone so distinguished an orator if he had not been roused, kindled and inflamed by the tyranny of Catiline, Verres, and Mark Antony? The habits of a vigorous mind are formed in contending with difficulties. All history will convince you of this, and that wisdom and penetration are the fruit of experience, not the lessons of retirement and leisure. Great necessities call out great virtues. When a mind is raised and animated by scenes that engage the heart, then those qualities, which would otherwise lie dormant, wake into life and form the character of the hero and the statesman. War, Tyranny, and desolation are the scourges of the Almighty, and ought no doubt to be deprecated. Yet it is your lot, my son, to be an eyewitness of these calamities in your own native land, and, at the same time, to owe your existence among a people who have made a glorious defense of their invaded liberties, and who, aided by a generous and powerful ally, with the blessing of Heaven, will transmit this inheritance to ages yet unborn.

"Nor ought it to be one of the least of your incitements towards exerting

every power and faculty of your mind, that you have a parent who has taken so large and active a share in this contest, and discharged the trust reposed in him with so much satisfaction as to be honored with the important embassy which at present calls him abroad.

"The strict and inviolable regard you have ever paid to truth, gives me pleasing hopes that you will not swerve from her dictates, but add justice, fortitude, and every manly virtue which can adorn a good citizen, do honor to your country, and render your parents supremely happy, particularly your ever affectionate mother,

"A. A."

She sent them the newspapers, and every publication or piece of writing or gossip or news that came her way, and her own trenchant report, regularly, of the way things were going, which was long in being well. . . .

" . . . What shall I say of our political affairs?" she wrote to John. "Shall I exclaim at measures now impossible to remedy? No. I will hope *all* from the generous aid of our allies, in concert with our own exertions. I am not suddenly elated or depressed. I know America capable of anything she undertakes with spirit and vigor. 'Brave in distress, serene in conquest, drowsy when at rest,' is her true characteristic. Yet I deprecate a failure in our present effort. The efforts are great, and we give, this campaign, more than half our property to defend the other. He who tarries from the field cannot possibly earn sufficient at home to reward him who takes it. Yet, should Heaven bless our endeavours, and crown this year with the blessings of peace, no exertion will be thought too great, no price of property too dear. My whole soul is absorbed in the idea. The honor of my dearest friend, the welfare and happiness of this wide-extended country, ages yet unborn, depend for their happiness and security upon the able and skilful, the honest and upright, discharge of the important trust committed to him. It would not become me to write the full flow of my heart upon this occasion. My constant petition for him is, that he may so discharge the trust reposed in him as to merit the approving eye of Heaven, and peace, liberty, and safety crown his latest years in his own native land. ". . .

Writing to John, thinking of John, she grew more lonely, so that she could no longer keep the house, but must don calash and winter cloak, and call her chaise, and ride forth, the weather permitting, to visit the lonely Mistress Dana.

But Mistress Dana fell on her with groans and tears—a kindred soul to weep with.

"I am a mere philosopher to her," wrote Abigail, whimsically, to the one from whom she herself was parted for the—thousandth time? It seemed so! "I am *inured,* but not hardened, to the painful portion. Shall I live to see it otherwise?"

CHAPTER XXXVII

PEACE!

25th October, 1782.

"MY Dearest Friend,

"The family are all retired to rest; the busy scenes of the day are over; a day which I wished to have devoted in a particular manner to my dearest friend; but company falling in prevented it, nor could I claim a moment until this silent watch of the night.

"Look, (is there a dearer name than *friend?* Think of it for me,) look to the date of this letter, and tell me, what are the thoughts which arise in your mind? Do you not recollect, that eighteen years have run their circuit since we pledged our mutual faith to each other, and the hymeneal torch was lighted at the altar of Love? Yet, yet it burns with unabating fervor. Old Ocean has not quenched it, nor old Time smothered it in this bosom. It cheers me in the lonely hour; it comforts me even in the gloom which sometimes possesses my mind.

"It is, my friend, from the remembrance of the joys I have lost, that the arrow of affliction is pointed. I recollect the untitled man, to whom I gave my heart, and in the agony of recollection, when time and distance present themselves together, wish he had never been any other. Who shall give me back time? Who shall compensate to me those years I cannot recall? How dearly have I paid for a titled husband? Should I wish you less wise, that I might enjoy more happiness? I cannot find that in my heart. Yet Providence has wisely placed the real blessings of life within the reach of moderate abilities; and he who is wiser than his neighbor sees so much more to pity and lament, that I doubt whether the balance of happiness is in his scale.

"I feel a disposition to quarrel with a race of beings who have cut me off, in the midst of my days, from the only society I delighted in. 'Yet no man liveth for himself,' says an authority I will not dispute. Let me draw satisfaction from this source, and, instead of murmuring and repining at my lot, consider it in a more pleasing view. Let me suppose, that the same gracious Being, who first smiled upon our union and blessed us in each other, endowed my friend with powers and talents for the benefit of mankind, and gave him a willing mind to improve them for the service of his country. You have obtained honor and reputation at home and abroad. O! may not an inglorious peace wither the laurels you have won. . . ."

They had been parted, this time, for close on three years. Three years, for Abigail, as farmeress, statistician, politician, patriot. Three years as the wife of one who had won laurels indeed—though brickbats had, it must be confessed, been more in evidence at times!

And she knew something, at least, of those three years of John's—and a little of it at first hand. . . . For Charles had had to be sent home, his health broken.

It was no wonder. The frigate *Sensible* had sprung a leak, and the small boys and their father had been forced to take a perilous journey on mule-back from Ferrol, in Spain, whither the leaky *Sensible* had hobbled, to Paris.

From John's letters, more tactfully scant than formerly, she had gathered that he had not been welcomed by de Vergennes, or supported very heartily by the contented Franklin, though such good friends as the Comte d'Estaing and other congenial acquaintances of his first Paris visit had helped all in their power to make his second stay a pleasant one. He had employed his time in writing articles for the French papers, calculated to enlighten the French people concerning America and her aims. (Unfortunately, he had enlightened de Vergennes also, concerning a great many things not in tune with the Comte's own ambitions.)

Later, letters suddenly emanating from Holland had meant that he had found more grateful occupation, for the time being. He had, in fact, put through, in Holland, a financial loan that had raised the hopes of the crippled colonies, deeply in debt to France, a thou-

sand-fold; and with equal efficiency he had secured the recognition of the Dutch States General for the United States of America and her accredited commissioner.

As for Johnny, he had been sent to Leyden University for a brief course, and managed to distinguish himself there; and later he had, to save his father's too-slender purse, acted as John's secretary. Nor was this all of the young man's achievement, for more recently still he had actually accompanied Mr. Dana, the new minister to Russia, on his journey to St. Petersburg, working as that gentleman's secretary likewise.

Which meant that Abigail had had the anguish, at one time, of knowing Johnny in Petersburg, John in Paris, and Charles—God knew where; sick, on his way home in care of some official gentlemen.

Meanwhile the tide of war had gone, month after month, against the patriots. Gates had failed, in the South, to live up to his former high achievement; and Arnold, at West Point, had all but sold his country. . . .

And patriot hopes sank lower—till Rochambeau arrived, with four thousand men, backed by the Comte de Grasse and a more than adequate fleet, and joined Washington at White Plains.

Cornwallis rushed to Yorktown, to defend the Hampton Roads. And Washington and his allies marched southward also, and took Cornwallis and all his troops. Yorktown was rewon. Cornwallis was vanquished, valiantly fighting. . . .

And in London, John wrote Abigail, mobs were rioting, and the tongue of the press was loosed, and former Governor Hutchinson had dropped dead before the mob's fury. And my Lord North had cried,

"Oh, God! It is all over!"

And so it was—as far as he and his Tory Parliament were concerned. The Whigs came in, in England—and among them were some of the patriots' friends.

But what of John, in France?

"I am going to dinner with a Duke and a Dutchess and a number of Ambassadors and Senators in all the luxury of this luxurious world; but how much more luxurious it would be to me to dine upon roast beef with Parson Smith, Dr. Tufts or Norton Quincy! or upon rusticoat potatoes with Portia! Ah! Oh! hi, ho, hum, and her daughter and sons!"

There had been heartaches for both, and misunderstandings also. Abigail had reproached John for not writing when, indeed, he had—but that was in the past. John had reproved Abigail when he felt that she, thrifty soul, was drawing too many notes against his alarmingly slender account. But in his heart he must have known her too well not to feel remorse when the words were written and on their way.

She was the center of his universe. In Paris, with the amiable Franklin occupied in pleasant interlude, John might have dallied also; but his affections and his inclinations and his convictions did not lead that way.

He might bow before princesses, but it only made him long for his Abigail the more. He told her this, and roused her to pride and a declaration of eternal confidence.

"I never suffered an uneasy sensation on that account. I know I have a right to your whole heart, because my own never knew another lord; and such is my confidence in you, that, if you were not withheld by the strongest of all obligations, those of a moral nature, your honor would not suffer you to abuse my confidence. . . . Your daughter, your image, your superscription, desires to be affectionately remembered to you."

And now Mrs. Adams made a momentous decision. If John was not to come home yet, she would go to him, wind and storm and ocean hazards notwithstanding, taking their daughter with her. She would make herself brave them, and worse, for he had asked her to come.

He had asked her to come—if he did not come home. Laurens and Jay, at de Vergennes' request, had been added to the peace commission in Paris. But John had taken the step now, tired to

death of inaction, of despatching to the Congress a resignation of all his offices, and was waiting for its acceptance.

So Abigail might hope again—might rise from her visions of lost years—might expect to be spared that dreaded uprooting.

"If you had known," said a caller to her at this time, "that Mr. Adams would have remained so long abroad, would you have consented that he should have gone?"

She "recollected herself a moment," she tells us. Perhaps she thought of her youth; her friendship with John; their young love; the score of years that had rolled over them since then, renewing their affection, increasing it, blessing it four-fold. Doubtless she thought of the years of separation—of John's signal honors, the badges of her private unhappiness. The question must have pierced her heart, sensitive in its loneliness. But John's image would rise before her—not John the ambassador, but young John Adams, obscure, untitled and unwelcome to most of her family, to whom she had given her girlish affections.

"And then," she writes, "I spoke the real dictates of my heart."

"If I had known, sir," she said, "that Mr. Adams could have effected what he has done, I would not only have submitted to the absence I have endured, painful as it has been, but I would not have opposed it, even though three years more should be added to the number (which Heaven avert!). I feel a pleasure in being able to sacrifice my selfish passions to the general good, and in imitating the example, which has taught me to consider myself and family but as the small dust of the balance, when compared with the great community."

But she did not know as yet how much John had effected—how much of oppression, through his and another's ministrations, was soon to pass from the face of the American nation forever. He sent her private pages from his diary late in December, and from these, which he enjoined it on her to guard faithfully, she got her first startled inkling. In that same letter he vowed, equally vital, but to another part of her soul,

"Whether there should be peace or war, I shall come home in the summer. As soon as I shall receive from Congress their acceptance of the resignation of all my employments, which I have transmitted many ways, I shall embark, and you may depend upon a good domestic husband for the remainder of my life, if it is the will of heaven that I should once more meet you. My promises are not lightly made with anybody. I have never broken one made to you, and I will not begin at this time of life."

"If it be the will of Heaven!" Not yet—neither the will of Heaven nor that of the Continental Congress of America.

In March the end came for Lord North, and the Whigs triumphed.

Now—for a parley! Now for plain talking and concerted action! Now, Benjamin Franklin! Now, John Adams! Now, John Jay! Now, Henry Laurens! Now France! Now Spain! Together.

The Duc d'Aranda talked with the Comte de Vergennes. . . . All right—except for the fact that they happened on their conversation when Adams, Franklin, Laurens and Jay were not present. . . .

"What of Spain's American possessions?" said Aranda. "What of Florida, Louisiana? If this new republic grows—which way will she grow?"

"France will not help her to grow," was Vergennes' thought. "France will help her to fight Great Britain, but, that accomplished——" He shrugged his Gallic shoulders.

"Let us treat with the British—alone," he said significantly. "Let us offer them concessions—this region of Ohio and the land south of the Great Lakes."

"Let us protect the land to the southward," said Aranda eagerly, "—give it back to the Indians, and govern it ourselves." By "ourselves," though, he meant Spain.

The Americans heard soon that the plan was to have America treat with Britain alone—without the aid of their allies. It was not difficult to grasp the import of this.

"Very well," said Adams and Jay. "If they are to treat with the

British in secret, and secure a personal favor; let us do likewise, and beat them at their own game."

"Impossible," said Franklin. "We are invested, remember, by Congress with no more power than to negotiate with the full concurrence of France."

"Concurrence means confidence, or implies it," said Jay. "France has apparently broken confidence, therefore concurrence may be esteemed to be broken likewise."

John Adams upheld him—how wholeheartedly only one who had been with Adams through his diplomatic adventure could have realized.

And in time, the agreement was unanimous.

They beat Vergennes and they beat Aranda—at their own game. Independently, both of their orders and of their former allies, they treated with the new British ministry; and triumphed beyond their wildest hopes. And once again John Adams must fight and fence—for the fisheries of the northeast United States, for the peaceable usage of the Mississippi River, and for fair boundaries to the northward.

And once again he succeeded, but did not add to his popularity.

The United States was free—or confined, at least, by nothing more repressive of man's liberty than the great Atlantic on the one hand, and the Mississippi, from its source farthest north down to West Florida, on the other. And what lay further westward was for America to find out.

"I will come home," said John Adams, having helped to win the peace that his countrymen's fortitude had made possible. "I will come home, and be a husband and a father."

But he was not going home yet a while.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

ANTICIPATIONS

MR. LOVELL was out of the Congress; Mr. Gerry, too. Abigail was getting her news of its doings by dribs and drabs, from here and there, and not as freely as formerly.

One item that came to her surely enough was that John Adams in particular, and his colleagues in general, had been censured in the Congress, by Mercer of Virginia and by James Madison, for giving offense to the Court of France through distrusting France's friendship. The point was not carried. It was held that the instructions had implied the coöperation and reciprocal action of France, and that de Vergennes had not lived up to this; and all that the two movers of the vote of censure got for their pains was a little personal discredit.

Far from having incurred censure, John would not, in any great probability, be allowed to resign his public office, Abigail also learned. Well, then, she would go to him!

He had told her not to come. He meant to be home in the spring. He feared, anyway, that she would be unhappy lodged in Europe, as Mrs. Jay was unhappy, longing for her home and fearing for the babies she had taken to the strange country. John did not want his children to be educated in Europe. He did not want to stay there, and would not, longer than must be. And that was on the knees of the gods of Congress—as long as his patience lasted. Congress might renew his former commission to make a treaty of commerce in due time with Great Britain, but it was unlikely. Unlikely, because the French pressure had been strong, and assuredly there would be little welcome for him at the Court of St. James's.

The spring passed, and still they both waited for word.

The summer, months of torrid calms—bad sailing weather. Now

it would be September, October, before he could come. But come he would, he said—he yearned to come home, to Portia, to babes no longer babes, to farm and yeoman pursuits. He hated this idleness, this uncertainty.

"I had rather be employed in carting street dust and marsh mud," he vowed in disgust.

Meanwhile Johnny was in Holland again, pursuing his studies, and earning commendations everywhere.

"You have before this day," wrote Abigail, perplexed, a few weeks later, "received a joint commission for forming a commercial treaty with Britain. I am at a loss to determine whether you will consider yourself so bound by it, as to tarry longer abroad. Perhaps there has been no juncture in the public affairs of our country, not even in the hour of our deepest distress, when able statesmen and wise counsellors were more wanted than at the present day. Peace abroad leaves us at leisure to look into our own domestic affairs. Although, upon an estimate of our national debt, it appears but as the small dust of the balance when compared to the object we have obtained, and the benefits we have secured, yet the restless spirit of man will not be restrained; and we have reason to fear that domestic jars and confusion will take the place of foreign contentions and devastation. Congress have commuted with the army by engaging to them five years' pay in lieu of half-pay for life. With security for this, they will disband contented; but our wise legislators are about disputing the power of Congress to do either, without considering their hands in the mouth of the lion, and that, if the just and necessary food is not supplied, the outrageous animal may become so ferocious as to spread horror and devastation. Another Theseus may arise, who, by his reputation and exploits of valor, his personal character and universal popularity, may destroy our Amphictyonic system, and subjugate our infant republic to monarchical domination. . . ."

Massachusetts was already a fiery example of internal dissension. The Treaty terms had killed the Tories; but who was a Tory, and who was not? The Massachusetts House had tried to show its revived confidence in Major Brattle, who, after his one unpardonable act, had evidenced every sign of friendship toward the country, by voting for his election as one of them again. Horror—and out

they went, the voters, and a new House of Representatives arose. No Brattles for Massachusetts! Sooner lose a Houseful of able men, if they voted for such an impossibility. Richard Cranch was of the number who fell.

But legislation did not improve by it. Massachusetts now had tariffs on incoming goods, and sister states had not. Very well—take goods to the states that had no tax. That was Massachusetts' loss. So business was bad here, taxes weighed the farmers down, and there was that spectral wake of the ship of war—unemployment.

But Abigail hoped, with John, that he would come home. In her heart of hearts, indeed, she dreaded sharing with him any public life, and above all, life at the Court of St. James's, which seemed by no means an impossible eventuality.

"Should the appointment, which I fear and you have hinted at, take place, it would indeed be a dull day to me. I have not a wish to join in a scene of life so different from that in which I have been educated; and in which my early, and, I must suppose, happier days, have been spent. Curiosity satisfied, and I shall sigh for tranquil scenes,

'And wish that Heaven had left me still
The whispering zephyr and the purling rill.'

"Well-ordered home is my chief delight, and the affectionate domestic wife, with the relative duties which accompany that character, my highest ambition. It was the disinterested wish of sacrificing my personal feelings to the public utility, which first led me to think of unprotectedly hazarding a voyage. I say unprotectedly, for so I consider every lady, who is not accompanied by her husband. This objection could only be surmounted by the earnest wish I had to soften those toils which were not to be dispensed with; and, if the public welfare required your labors and exertions abroad, I flattered myself that, if I could be with you, it might be in my power to contribute to your happiness and pleasure. But the day is now arrived, when, with honor and well-earned fame, you may return to your native land; when I cannot any longer consider it as my duty to submit to a further separation; and when it appears necessary, that those abilities, which have crowned you with laurels abroad, shall be exerted at home for the public safety.

"I do not wish you to accept an embassy to England, should you be

appointed. This little cottage has more heart-felt satisfaction for you than the most brilliant court can afford. . . ."

It was true. But—the call of country drew them both, on a cord that would not be broken. She did not "wish it," yet she could not veto it, as long as she felt that doing so might injure the infant country.

. . . Meanwhile. . . .

" . . . . If you and your daughter were with me, I could keep up my spirits; but idly and insipidly as I pass my time, I am weary, worn, and disgusted to death. I had rather chop wood, dig ditches and make fence upon my poor little farm. Alas, poor farm and poorer family, what have you lost, that your country might be free, and that others might catch fish and hunt deer and beaver at their ease?

"There will be as few of the tears of gratitude or the smiles of admiration or the sighs of pity for us as for the army. But all this should not hinder me from going over the same scenes again upon the same occasion, scenes which I would not encounter for all the wealth, pomp and powers of the world. Boys! if you ever say one word or utter one complaint, I will disinherit you. Work, you rogues and be free. You will never have so hard work to do as papa has had. Daughter! Get you an honest man for a husband and keep him honest. No matter whether he is rich, provided he be independent. Regard the honor and the moral character of the man, more than all other circumstances. Think of no other greatness but that of the soul, no other riches but those of the heart. . . ."

And still no disposition of him. It might be Christmas—it might be spring, before he could embark.

He was dining and supping with ambassadors, and tasting the sweet fruits of his own successful ambassadorship. He was a known figure, and his public office as a party to the peace treaty had won him fame at home and notoriety, at least, both in France and England.

But he would rather be a farmer!

His was not to be the decision, however. The letter from the Congress came at last. Franklin, Jay and Adams, to make a treaty

of commerce with Great Britain. Anxiety, at least, was over. But—Portia? And Portia's daughter—that budding woman, a beauty now, with a string of beaux, and even, it was whispered, an "understanding" with young Royall Tyler?

The load of care had been hoisted to John Adams' shoulders, and Franklin's and Jay's. The others had all come home. There was much to the treaty and its making. And there was to be another necessary side-trip to Holland—a second loan was badly needed to supplement the first, and who better versed than John Adams in putting it through? He must stay another winter.

"Will you come to me this fall," he wrote, and he confesses himself emotion-shaken at the mere notion of meeting her, "and go home with me in the spring? If you will, come with my dear Abby, leaving the two boys at Mr. Shaw's, and the house and place under the care of your father, uncle Quincy, or Dr. Tufts, or Mr. Cranch. This letter may reach you by the middle of October, and in November you may embark, and a passage in November or all December will be a good season. You may embark for London, Amsterdam, or any port in France. On your arrival, you will find friends enough. The moment I hear of it, I will fly with post horses to receive you, at least; and if the balloon should be carried to such perfection in the meantime as to give mankind the safe navigation of the air, I will fly in one of them at the rate of thirty knots an hour. This is my sincere wish. Although the expense will be considerable, the trouble to you great, and you will probably have to return with me in the spring, I am so unhappy without you that I wish you would come at all events. You must bring with you at least one maid and one man servant.

"I must, however, leave it with your judgment. You know better than I the real intentions at Philadelphia, and can determine better than I whether it will be more prudent to wait until the spring. I am determined to be with you in America, or have you with me in Europe, as soon as it can be accomplished, consistent with private prudence and the public mood. . . ."

He needed her more than ever, for he was ill of a fever. Brain and body were prostrated, now that they had come again from intensive work to idleness.

But he must be off to London, with Franklin and Jay. To lies

innumerable, in papers that now seethed enmity towards triumphant America. Lies concerning Adams. Lies concerning Jay. Franklin was a philosopher, a wise man, a world possession. He alone was welcome, so the papers said. The lies flew on the wings of spite to America. Adams and Jay had been offered the cold shoulder.

Abigail was far too wise by this time even to give the "news" thinking-space. And she was to learn that both Jay and Adams had, in truth, been surprisingly welcomed, civilly treated, their office honored everywhere. The republic was an infant, but an infant with world personality—and these three stood in England as its sponsors.

In London with Johnny, his sixteen-year-old secretary, John awaited word that wife and daughter were on their way. There was no happiness now without these two, no interest in lovely sights unless they could share it.

But Abigail, in distant Braintree, was mourning. That kindly, loving parson, her father, was gone, leaving a rich legacy of learning and good will in place of worldly lucre. An old man, but sorely missed. Even John, amid foreign distractions of sight and sound, felt his passing deeply, and suffered with Abigail across the leagues of ocean.

She must come to him. She would need him now more than ever, bereaved of one whom she had held so dear, reverenced so passionately. She must come to him, for he might not go to her.

But she was a coward, after all, when it came to journeying across the ocean in November. Badly as she needed him, much as she loved him, she could not face it. No husband, no son, to guard her on the wintry waters! Only her daughter and herself, alone on the weary voyage. She could not face it. She could not tell him she would do aught but wait until the spring, and then, if he did not come. . . . She yearned for him. But— That endless ocean! And the ship—alone!

There was another motive, also, for her delay. From what she heard of the Congress, there was no knowing what disposition

might presently be made of the various officers. Jay, she knew, had written to the Congress pressing the choice of John Adams for Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain; but there were others, richer, more spectacular, anxious for the office. One of these, assuredly, might be appointed. She did not wish it for John; that was certain. The thought of England for herself—of "dissipation, parade and nonsense"—was obnoxious. She was not strong, and he was not, either. Home—the farm—was the place for both, where she could nurse him, watch over him, care for his comfort. Her father had said, "You must never go, child, whilst I live." Her father was dead now, but she still felt tied here—afraid to venture out; preferring rather to read John's letters, and Johnny's, by her own fireside, and to wait there for the writers.

She wanted Johnny at Harvard; his father at home. Her heart swelled when the clergy, in public orations, paid tribute to the deeds of peace which John Adams had had a hand in. She rejoiced in his fame and his glory. She was proud of his undaunted courage, which had taken him from a fireside that itself, with all it meant, had lain in peril, to help his country in greater peril; and had kept him upright and on an unswerving road, in spite of every obstacle, till the goal had been reached. But now, when fame was his—she wanted him home.

Her friends advised her not to voyage this winter. And her inclinations cried out against the whole idea of the excursion into scenes so alien.

"Theory and practice are two very different things, and the object is magnified as I approach nearer to it. I think if you were abroad in a private character, and necessitated to continue there, I should not hesitate so much at coming to you; but a mere American, as I am, unacquainted with the etiquette of courts, taught to say the thing I mean, and to wear my heart in my countenance, I am sure I should make an awkward figure; and then it would mortify my pride, if I should be thought to disgrace you. Yet, strip royalty of its pomp and power, and what are its votaries more than their fellow worms?

"I have so little of the ape about me, that I have refused every public

invitation to figure in the gay world, and sequestered myself in this humble cottage, content with rural life and my domestic employment, in the midst of which I have sometimes smiled upon recollecting that I had the honor of being allied to an ambassador."

The Ambassador, however, was at a standstill as far as the British commercial treaty was concerned, and indeed, the Congress was soon to reform the commission and create a general committee, in Paris, to make commercial treaties when and where they were feasible.

In the meantime, though ill, John had left London temporarily for Holland, to negotiate the new loan. Of this journey he wrote in his diary, many years later,

"It was winter. My health was very delicate. A journey and voyage to Holland at that season would very probably put an end to my labors. I scarcely saw a possibility of surviving it. Nevertheless, no man knows what he can bear till he tries. A few moments' reflection determined me; for although I had little hope of getting the money, having experienced so many difficulties before, yet making the attempt and doing all in my power would discharge my own conscience; and ought to satisfy my responsibility to the public."

He had made journeys by road—on his horse. He had made journeys by land and by sea that were fraught with hourly danger. But not all the journeys of his life, including the tempestuous voyage by sea to France and the mule-ride over the mountains from Spain, were half the purgatory that this one proved to be. It took him four years, he always said—the four years that it took him to gain leave of his conscience and his country to sail for home again—four years to get over that journey from Bath, in England, to Amsterdam, in Holland, in January, 1784.

But he accomplished, once again, his allotted task; and in Holland, at last, he received the news which meant the realization of his heart's desire. On the twenty-sixth of July, 1784, he wrote his dearest friend, his cherished Abigail,

"Your letter of the 23rd has made me the happiest man upon earth. I am twenty years younger than I was yesterday. It is a cruel mortification to me that I cannot go to meet you in London, but there are a variety of reasons decisive against it, which I will communicate to you here. Meantime I send you a son who is the greatest traveller of his age, and without partiality, I think, as promising and manly a youth as is in the whole world. He will purchase a coach, in which we four must travel to Paris. Let it be large and strong, with an imperial and accommodations for travelling. I wish you to see the Hague before you go to France. The season is beautiful both here and in England. The journey here will be pleasant, excepting an hour or two of sea-sickness between Harwich and Helvoetsluys. You may come conveniently with your two children and your maid in the coach, and your man may ride on horseback or in the stage coach.

"I can give you no counsel about clothes. Mr. Puller will furnish the money you want upon your order or receipt. Expenses I know will be high, but they must be borne, and as to clothes for yourself and daughter, I beg you to do what is proper, let the expense be what it may. Every hour to me will be a day, but don't you hurry or fatigue or disquiet yourself upon the journey. Be careful of your health. After spending a week or two here, you will have to set out with me to France, but there are no seas between, a good road, a fine season, and we will make moderate journeys, and see the curiosities of several cities in our way; Utrecht, Breda, Antwerp, Brussels, etc. etc. It is the first time in Europe that I looked forward to a journey with pleasure. Now, I promise myself a great deal. I think it lucky that I am to go to Paris, where you will have an opportunity to see that city; to acquire its language, etc. It will be more agreeable to you to be there than here, perhaps, for some time. For my own part, I think myself made for this world.

"Yours, with more ardor than ever,

"JOHN ADAMS."

He had not come home to her in the spring; so now she would summon her courage at last and go to him.*

* Josiah Quincy, in his Memoirs, recalls being taken by his mother to bid Mrs. Adams farewell before she left for England. "I remember her," he writes, "a matronly beauty, in which respect she yielded to few of her sex; full of joy, and elevated with hope. Peace had just been declared, independence obtained, and she was preparing to go from that humble mansion to join the husband she loved, at the Court of St. James's."

CHAPTER XXXIX

TRIBULATIONS

FOR the forty years of her life, Abigail Adams' situation had been that of a passive onlooker at scenes domestic, troubled, turbulent by turns. Weymouth, Boston, Braintree had been a cocoon from which there had been no more disturbing emergence than the gentle feeler of a trip or two to Salem, or here or there in a minute radius. Through thirty or so of the forty, her capable mind had traveled over the growing world; scaled its heights and plumbed its depths. But her person, at forty, had grown used to its retirement, and had made itself a wall of custom and reserve and modesty which it was hard to break down.

Small wonder, then, that the stately lady of comfortable figure and comfortable habits who found herself, amazingly, on board the trader *Active* on a day of closing June must pinch herself to make sure she was not dreaming. Was she, Abigail Adams, actually on her way from a humble farm to play her part in high society circles, and in foreign lands?

But no—not June! It was July, well, before Mistress Abigail could summon strength, aboard her ship, to pinch herself!

Oh, that sea! That suffering—that heaving journey! Abby, she, the maid Esther, the man Briesler—all laid low in their cabins, as their fellow-passengers in theirs. And Job, the good boy that sister Cranch had pressed on her—young Job had his hands full, and seemed to be running the ship and its hospital as well. Ten days at sea they were before they could do aught, the rest of them, but crawl to the cold, damp deck.

She kept a diary, wanly; but not till those ten days were gone, with their prostrating distresses, did she begin her promised newsletter to her sisters.

She lay writhing on her narrow bunk, in the clothes she had been totally unable to take off at all. She tried to sip the fragrant wine-cordial that Job made and brought; tried *not* to savor the all-pervading reek of the boat—leaky oil and smoky potash, its cargo. She thought of a phrase that John had once put in a letter, "No being in nature can be so disagreeable as a lady at sea!" She was glad he was not here now! Oh, the rolling of that ship, the quivering! And it was a filthy hole of a ship, at best, with slops from unsteady food-bowls all over the place; and the cook a great, colored fellow who seemed to hash up everything, himself included, as Abigail duly noted, in grease. Ugh!

Maybe it was the dirt that ultimately restored the housewife Abigail. At any rate she was on her feet at last, and not only on her feet but getting Briesler onto his, and tactfully gathering mops, scrapers, brushes, vinegar and water and making war on the dirt and the slops! She was an established favorite and authority on board at once! They rallied to her, and to her daughter, the winsome nineteen-year-old. There was Colonel Norton, a soldier "of honest contact, if not of lettered converse"; there was a Briton of the name of Greene, more brilliant, but more haughty, too; there was the ship's doctor, Clark, who watched over them like a mother in their need; there was Mr. Foster, a kindly merchant, who talked with longing of his domestic hearth; and there was the wit of the boat—Mr. Spear, a bachelor who seemed to be able to sleep or to laugh, no matter what the weather or the sensation that came of it. There was, too, to be sure, a Lieutenant Mellicot, but he drank most of the time, and could hardly be counted one of the party. And for the only other female member, besides themselves and Esther, there was another Mrs. Adams, a stranger. She was a companionable, pretty woman, and swiftly formed a friendship with her namesake's attractive daughter.

Rock, rock—this cradle on the waves! Two of the gentlemen must assist each lady to cross a cabin—to mount to the chilly deck, where, though it was midsummer, "a double calico gown, a baize

A Adams

overdress, and a cloth cloak too were not too much." There they would sit, Abby and Abigail, not daring to move till they must.

"A good easterly breeze!" cried the sailors thankfully, as, after a three-day calm, the ship skimmed out from below the Banks of Newfoundland.

"A breeze!" wailed Mistress Adams, prostrate in her chair. Beside her was a kindly male, his hand supporting her arm firmly, his legs stretched out and his feet bracing themselves against another chair, or she certainly must have slid as the bottles and the mugs and the plates were slipping on the tables and on the floors all around them. And Abby was similarly sustained.

The waves were slapping against the hardy ship's sides, till it seemed they must "slap" them through. Glass and earthenware slipped from the tables and shattered themselves on the cabin floor. Abigail rose—tottered a step or two—caught at her neighbor and held to him till she was in her state-room, where she stayed, debilitated. She no longer cared what became of her. She only wanted to sleep, or to die, or for the terrible rocking to stop—somehow!

"If this be a breeze," she cried, "great Heaven, deliver me from a storm!"

It was so public! The state-room door opened into the cabin, where all the men slept. Its window looked onto the companionway. She and Abby must close their doors, in spite of airlessness, while they dressed and undressed; open them, and draw the curtains around their couches, while they tried to sleep.

The Captain said that, if the wind held, they might make the voyage in thirty days—actually a hundred miles a day. Meanwhile Abigail wrote to her sisters, and thought of them and of her little boys, and of the man and the grown son whom she and her grown daughter were soon to meet—please God! She grew used to writing at the big table in the common cabin, with the gentlemen playing backgammon or writing or reading or eating around her; her maid sitting by her, knitting; the lazy Abby probably asleep in her cubby-hole with her cabin-companion, the other Mrs. Adams.

"Some large paper, ma'am." The Captain bent over her, politely tendering great sheets of it. "You will find it more convenient, I'm certain."

He was right—she certainly was writing a budget on her idleness. And he was kind, though he had looked so forbidding, at first, that she had been almost afraid to sail on his ship. You never could tell!

Sixteen hundred miles covered! Fourteen hundred miles to go, and then. . . . She was filled with fear, and with hope and joy, mingled.

"A joy chastised by piety,
A joy prepared to weep."

She put the couplet in her letter.

She embroidered sometimes. She read sometimes. But she found most pleasant occupation in writing.

They ran into a fog. Confinement grew worse. Little annoyances and troubles magnified.

The fog lifted. Sails all square! The ship was running seven knots. The Captain took her on a tour, and taught her the names and positions of mast and sail, tiller and wheel. She was an apt pupil.

"I do believe you know well enough, ma'am, to take a turn at the helm."

(Thus Mrs. Adams reports the conversation.)

"Nay, sir, I might do very well enough in fair weather, but 't is your masculine spirits that are made for storms."

Fine weather now—a smooth sea, and just enough wind; gorgeous, blazing sunsets; only the great, greasy, shambling negro cook whom nothing could be done about.

"No more knowledge of cookery than a savage," wrote Abigail, "nor any kind of order in the distribution of his dishes; but on they come, higgledy-piggledy, with a leg of pork all bristly; a quarter of an hour after, a pudding; or, perhaps, a pair of roast fowls, first of all, and then will follow one by one a piece of beef, and, when dinner is nearly completed, a plate of potatoes."

The men didn't care. If they got food enough five times a day, they were satisfied. But she and Abby and Mrs. Adams—squeamish females,—if they did not like it, they could go hungry.

Bad weather once more! Then a calm, which was nearly as bad, for it had a heaving swell to it, the aftermath of the storm; and the ship, not riding, was shaken and rocked mercilessly.

"I begin to think," wrote Abigail, "that a calm is not desirable in any situation in life. Every object is most beautiful in motion; a ship under sail, trees gently agitated with the wind, and a fine woman dancing, are three instances in point. Man was made for action and for bustle too. I am quite out of conceit with calms."

She had reason. The damp was finding her weak spots, and bringing severe rheumatic pains, so that she must call the doctor, and be rubbed, and rout out the medicines that she had put up for such an emergency.

Then the wind came up again, but it was the wrong way around, which made matters worse.

Three days' good wind would bring them to land. But the mist and the adversity continued, and she was sick, and her maid-servant also.

The younger Abby, plump, pretty and dark-eyed, bustled around, trying to cheer the sufferer with news of the ship, and with gossip as to the Captain's hopes of a speedy arrival.

Abigail managed to grow a little more accustomed to the ceaseless motion, and tried to take a part in the ship's life. She was popular, if she *was* forthright! She could be pleasant with simple people, but she would not tolerate a snob—like Mr. Greene, for instance.

She tackled Mr. Greene one night, when his queries as to some man's claims to noble birth had unusually irked her. He would have no one else's opinions. England was the world. The rest of the universe outside the pale. Title was worth; birth, everything.

"He only notices *us* because we are allied to greatness!" little Abby quaintly put it.

"In my country, sir," said Abigail to Greene, "merit, not title, gives a man preëminence. I do not doubt, sir, that it is a mortifying circumstance to the British nobility to find themselves so often conquered by mechanics and mere husbandmen; but we esteem it our glory to draw such characters not only into the field, but into the Senate; and I believe, sir," she finished, "that no one will deny that they have shone in both."

He dropped the subject, and turned to those on which he was "more entertaining and intelligent," says Abigail; while the other passengers secretly lauded Mistress Adams.

"Such men have no music in their souls," was her summing up.

At last! The ship was running before a good, strong wind. On the seventeenth they sounded, hopefully—and certainly hope was required. . . .

The weight found bottom—fifty-five fathom! Many boats came around them—and one came to talk.

They were in the Channel at last.

"My advice, ma'am," said the Captain, coming down. "Get what things you wish to carry on shore into your small trunks, while she lies so quiet. I hope to land you at Portsmouth, seventy miles distant from London, tomorrow, or next day."

But they had more to go through yet. Sunday, the eighteenth, was smooth and gentle; but that night the wind shifted, and finally it blew into a gale that kept the Captain on the deck for two days. More suffering for the womenfolk—yes, and the menfolk, too. And it was foggy besides. There were many vessels around. They might run into one, or be run down by her. Abigail's head agonized, and her heart was sick with longing.

But Tuesday brought the cliffs of Dover to their weary eyes at last! The cliffs of Dover, the castle upon them, the town. It rained still, and was gusty, but what of that? The anchor was down; a pilot-boat was here. They stood to at last, past Dover, at Deal.

No wharf at Deal. A small boat must be carried right on shore by a friendly wave—it was a bold shore, like Nantasket—and men must catch it and make fast. The pilot-boat was about as large, Abigail noted, as that which plied as ferry between Boston and Charlestown; the distance twice as far. And the surf was running six feet high!

"Too rough, yet, for the ladies to land," said the gentlemen. "We will go first, and come out for them when it calms."

But the pilots assured them otherwise. Eager to get money! thought Abigail, but she did not demur, so eager was she herself to feel land at last beneath her feet.

They were wrapped up warmly; helped by the ship's crew; lowered into the waiting boat.

There was a sort of pang, after all, at parting. They had been so close, so like one family, aboard. They had grown to know each other more intimately than any sojourn of like length on land could allow.

Oh! These waves—so high, then so low! One of the gentlemen stood by Abigail, and held her firm as he braced himself against the boat's side, and she held him, with both arms about his knees. She was in no different plight from the other women. They must all hold on, or be lost.

Up! Down! Up! Down!

Splash! They were drenched with a wave's broadside.

Bang! They were there, literally thrown on shore like flotsam by the tide.

Land at last! But they had leapt out too soon, in their zeal and their terror. Their feet sank deep in the tide-washed sand.

"We looked," wrote Abigail, ruefully, "like a parcel of Naiads, just rising from the sea."

They found a public-house; entered; were enabled to change their sopping clothes, dry themselves, rest on beds that only seemed to rock! Abigail could not eat, though the younger Abby had recuperated already and was hungry. They must stay the night here

—coaches at six next morning. All, that was, save Mr. Greene, who was off for London forthwith.

"And nobody will mourn him!" said Abigail.

They rose at five next morning. The post-chaises were at the door—four carriages in all. She and Esther got into the first, with one of the gentlemen, named Foster; Abby, with Dr. Clark, into the next; Colonel Norton and Mrs. Adams and the latter's brother in the third; and Spear and Mellicot in the fourth. Quite a cavalcade.

Eighteen miles to Canterbury! The roads were wonderful to Abigail. No stony pathways here, save in the towns. On all sides were vast rolling fields, gracious and beautiful, of wheat, oats, beans and hops. It was not, somehow, as such a verdant garden that she had pictured England. Her admiration was as yet unwilling, but it flowed.

Where were the fences? There were hedges along the road, and here and there dividing, but nothing more. Where were the herdsmen? The cattle roamed at large, or seemed to—smallish oxen, but larger cows and sheep than she had seen at home.

They rolled over Canterbury's cobbled streets. Stopped. Alighted. Discharged the carriages, and called for fresh ones.

"In a few moments, sir," said a red-faced countryman, pulling at his forelock. They were in the yard of an inn, which they entered now. A lace-capped, silk-gowned woman came smiling to greet the party.

"Good day. Can I serve you, ma'am?"

Abigail told her they wished breakfast—for ten people.

"This way, madam." The innkeeper's lady led the way to a sun-filled parlor, with cutlery set on an oaken board. "Breakfast will be here in ten minutes."

And it was; the price reasonable; the service and the food most excellent. Abigail's admiration grew. She was surprised, warmed by such familiar hospitality in a strange country.

They toured the town—a larger town than Boston. She thought the many Gothic cathedrals looked more like jails, and the close

way they were guarded rendered them further so. The houses, too, were heavy-looking, some with their roofs thatched, others with roofs of crooked brick tiles.

They rode on, past vast mysterious country estates, enclosed within walls.

The second stop was Rochester, a pretty town; the third, Chatham, where they tarried to dine, at an elegant inn. Footmen came running to them in this yard—as many footmen as there were carriages. One of these lowered the step of Abigail's carriage; helped her out; inquired of Mr. Foster if more horses or chaises were needed. "Very good. Will supply you directly, sir." A hostess appeared, as before—a woman of poise and dress.

"Your commands, ma'am? Do you desire a chamber?" The chambermaid hovered in the offing. No. They must be on their way before dark; but they requested dinner. In half an hour, dinner. The bill of fare was brought them, and they chose.

For half an hour they rested, or washed, or talked. The call to dinner came on the minute—an elegant table, Abigail reports, set in a gentleman's style. Powdered waiters to bring the subsidiary dishes. Mine host or hostess in person, carrying the main roast, and carving it. These were post-chaise travelers, and as such commanded respect. Fish, fowl, and meat they had, and vegetables, and a sweet; and then were on their way—swiftly, or dark would overtake them before they had passed Blackheath, which must not be.

It must not be, indeed! A chaise went galloping by them, to be swallowed up in the distance. Soon, out of the distance, came a public coach, with those aboard her "setting up a mighty hue and cry."

"A robbery, a robbery!"

They learned that the gentleman who had sat alone in the chaise had met with a highwayman, and been robbed. Alarmed, they all began to hide their own money. Every place they passed, and every chaise they met, warned them with cries, "A robbery!" From what Abigail had heard, highway robberies were common affairs on

Blackheath. If this was so, she thought, the alarm they met with seemed disproportionate.

But presently they met a sorrier sight—the highwayman in person, caught, on foot; his captor astride his horse, and holding his commandeered pistol. He was a mere youth—a boy; he looked so despairing, though he tried to lift his hat to the cavalcade.

"Ay," his captors shouted. "You have but a short time; the assize sits next month; and then, my lad, you swing!"

Abigail tells her sister how she shuddered. A robber might deserve to die, but no one ought to exult over him, doomed. It was a custom strange to her, and abhorrent.

They rode ahead, meeting no more disturbances. And at eight in the evening they arrived at Low's Hotel in Covent Garden, at that end of London in which the Court resided. Here John had lodged. Was he here now, awaiting her?

Mr. Adams was not here. Mr. Smith, of Boston, they told her, had been seeking her, having knowledge of her sailing with Captain Lyde, and of his ship's arrival.

Mr. Spear was going to the custom-house and would seek Mr. Smith and inform him on the way back.

By good fortune Spear met Mr. Smith and Mr. Storer, of Boston, both right near the custom house. "Who?" "Where?" "Here?" "Now!" And they set off at a run, he told her later.

It was good to see them, her own countrymen.

"How do you, ma'am?" They were wringing her hands.

"I am well, and how do ye?"

"We rejoice to see you here."

"But where is Mr. Adams? Can you tell me what of him?"

They could not. But they could tell her of Johnny.

"We know this, ma'am. Your son has been a month here, waiting for your arrival. He expected you with Callaghan, but, on getting letters from you by him, Master John returned to the Hague."

"I just now had a letter from my father," said Smith, "acquainting me that you had taken passage with Captain Lyde. This intelli-

gence I forwarded, three days ago, to Holland. You should expect your son or your husband at any time."

Meanwhile they were kind to her. Young Smith had engaged other lodgings for her, to which both gentlemen accompanied her next morning. She was soon installed at Osborne's New Family Hotel, in the Adelphi, where she found herself provided with "a fine drawing-room, genteelly furnished, and a large bedroom." The rate was three guineas a week, which included the services of a cook, chambermaid and waiter. Food and drink must be paid for separately.

She was here. She was housed, and Abby, and their attendants. So far, so good.

But where was John? Or where, at least, was Johnny?

CHAPTER XL

JOY

HER delight with London grew—that "pleasant disappointment" (for she had thought to find a city alien to her likes. There had been many to tell her so. They had told her it nearly always rained; but here in these July days was clear, bright sunshine without oppressive heat, so that she could sally forth in hooped lutestring and Leghorn hat, to shop, to roam, to explore, to while away the time; and Abby with her, when the minx was not dallying with hairdressers and mantua-makers!).

Emerging from her Adelphi resting-place, she would think, each time, of Boston. It might be Boston, this—so quiet, so homelike, so pleasant.

There were many to turn and to glance. Americans! There was a difference in the hair-dress, in the adornment of feminine facial charms—a certain cultivated femininity that it was rather customary,

at the time, for Englishwomen to sacrifice somewhat for more athletic vogues.

They wandered in Cheapside, at the ancient mercers' shops, and marveled that silks should be dearer here than the same silks in Boston. A tax went on here, apparently, that came off again before the stuffs reached America!

But they might not tarry long at their pricing. Social engagements claimed them immediately—and now Abigail found herself confronted with a problem of callers which she had not wholly foreseen. American, they flocked to her in the Adelphi, the wife of peace-commissioner John Adams. Homesick, she was a part of home to them, and a person to be honored also.

But those who were homesick, she found, were not alone those who had espoused the patriot cause. Before she had breakfasted one morning, Esther came to announce visitors—Parson and Mrs. Hallowell, of Boston. Last time Abigail had seen Parson Walter, he had been keeping very quiet from the wrath of those who knew he took the loyalist side; it was soon after that he had brought his wife to England.

Well, the war was over. They met affably, and Abigail was invited to dine.

She was inundated with callers and with invitations—all the old familiar names of home, that warmed her waiting heart—Jackson, Winslow Warren, Rogers, Boylston, Atkinson, Smith, Hay, Appleton. Americans from the Hague called, or left their cards; from Paris; from Petersburg. Some names she knew, some she did not. But if they were Americans they paid their respects to her because of it, or because they had met her distinguished husband.

Old friends, and new. Prentice Cushing bowed over her hand at Mrs. Atkinson's, where she went to dine. Amazingly frugal, these London dinners, compared with home. Was Massachusetts, then, extravagant? Where a Massachusetts gentleman's table bore four or five choices of meat, an Englishman's bore but one or two.

The English dress was plainer, also—the men's clothes little adorned; the women punctilious on the point of hairdress and of hoops, but sallying forth to formal occasions in "a plain straw hat, without a cap under it, and a simple lutestring dress, or a muslin one."

But hospitality, friendliness, was rife. If Mistress Atkinson's dinner consisted merely of a turbot, a soup, a roast of lamb and a cherry pie, her treatment of her guests of honor made of it a feast.

Abigail grew more happily expectant. A Mr. Murray had come from The Hague with the news that he had left John excessively anxious for his wife's coming. Mr. Adams had removed Monsieur Dubois, his agent, and his family from the *Hôtel des Etats Unis d'Amerique,* and was full of fine preparations. Would he know by now that she was here?

"I trust so," said Abigail. "I sent today by the post, to acquaint him, but I hope he may have heard it earlier, and be on his way—he or our son."

It thrilled her, even to say it!

"Your son, ma'am," said the courtly gentleman, smiling, "had a cruel disappointment when Callaghan arrived on the ship without you. I traveled with him to The Hague again, and he was melancholy, and when we got there, Mr. Adams more so."

She must wait a little longer. And meanwhile London was a pleasant place, of gracious buildings, wide streets and comfortable retreat. She was not allowed to grow homesick. Dr. Clark came to visit her each day, rousing young Abby to laughter by his statement that he had not seen a handsome woman since he got off the boat.

"I find every old woman to look like that hideous old party—what's her name—it begins with an H——," he said, twinkling; "and every young one to look like—well, ladies, like the D——l!"

And little Abby would throw back her pretty head, elegantly dressed in the London style to match her new London gowns, and clasp her hands to her breast and laugh—no giggle, but a regular, hearty laugh. John's image, indeed.

Everyone was so kind to them. Smith took Abigail to Mr. Copley, the famous artist, who had painted a full-length likeness of John Adams.

Storer accompanied them to the handsome house, where the master received them with honor, and led them at once to his picture of the statesman.

We have Mrs. Adams' word that it was an excellent likeness. A globe—a small world—stood before the sturdy figure; a map of Europe was in his hand; and near him, the figures of Peace and Innocence. How beautiful to Abigail! How wonderful! She could hardly tear herself away.

It was an intensely interesting house, filled with the work of the great painter. Here was the masterpiece—The Death of Lord Chatham, a painting of the statesman expiring as he made his last deathless plea in the House in favor of reconciliation with the American colonies, equal rights for all subjects of the Crown, and a cessation of warfare. English sons and English Parliamentarians crowded about him.

Englishmen, thought Abigail? Those faces were familiar! They might have been the likenesses of friends at home. One race, after all! One object, it was to be hoped, in the future—the peace that John had helped to make.

The pictures fascinated her. The war scenes moved her to tears. She was loth to leave them, but disliked to encroach on the great man's time.

Storer and Smith were able guides, and good providers of amusement. From Mr. Copley's they took her and Abby to see the eccentric Mrs. Wright.

They sent their names up, and followed the servant. The younger Abby was on tiptoe with curiosity, for the house was strange and mysteriously, significantly musty from its entrance. They had hardly reached the first-floor landing when a door burst open, and a bizarre figure flung herself upon Abigail. Mrs. Wright was old and dirty, unkempt, indeed, to the point of the slattern. Her gown was

stained, her fingers uncared for, her graying hair a tousled mess. She kissed Abigail.

"Why, is it really and in truth Mrs. Adams? And that your daughter? Why, you dear soul you, how young you look. Well, I am glad to see you. All of you Americans? Well, I must kiss you all." And she did, the dirty-looking creature, gentlemen and ladies. "I make no distinction," she cried. "I love everybody that comes from America."

She told Abigail, who could hardly get in a word, that Mr. Adams had called on her, and made her a noble present; that he had sent her a card. She showed it to them.

"Dear creature!" she chattered on, going before them into a curious room, "I design to have his head."

She led the way to a far corner, where an old man and an old woman sat.

"There," she said, pointing, "are my old father and mother. Don't be ashamed of them because they look so. They are good folks."

If Abigail and Abby had not been prepared, it would have been an experience more gruesome even than it was. Indeed, though they realized that the figures that sat in the window were wax-works (a predilection of Dame Wright's), they felt repelled. In the very center of the room was a clergyman, reading a paper. And he was wax, too, though at first they doubted it, in spite of the fact that the fame of the lady's exhibits had reached them from many sources. They were pleased to get away, back to the hotel, to dress for Mrs. Hallowell's dinner. The Hallowells were begging Abigail to lodge with them, and she was embarrassed by the necessity of finding enough reasons for declining. But the dinner they gave her and Abby and Storer and Smith was homelike, though Parson Walter had apparently not found his loyal sentiments specially lucrative.

On Sunday, Divine Service. Abigail felt eager to give thanks for the mercies she had received. She engaged a coach for the day

—twelve and sixpence sterling!—and went to church at the Foundling Hospital, with her friends and guides. Service was held in a great chapel on the second floor of the long building on the green—a galleried chapel, with its rows of seats like the familiar seating of Concert Hall in Boston. The orphans sat in the balcony, on either side of the organ loft—nice little girls on one side, quiet little boys on the other; boys in brown, with red trimmings; girls in brown, with red girdles and checked stomachers and aprons and white cloth caps trimmed with narrow lace.

After the service, Abigail was taken to see the dining-rooms and the bedrooms, and all the little orphans were ranked to curtsey and to smile at her. The lettering over the door said—"Can a mother forget her suckling child?" It tore at the Massachusetts mother's heartstrings.

It was a monstrous big city, this London! Limitless, it seemed to Abigail, as she drove through it in her hired coach, with the Atkinsons and the gentlemen and Abby.

In the evening, after dinner at Mrs. Atkinson's, another drive to the Magdalen Hospital for late service. We read in letters to Mary Cranch how the "unhappy women," the patients of the institution, moved her. They sat in a gallery, screened by a barrier of green gauze. Their voices, raised in "melancholy melody," affected her to tears.

In her rooms again she found cards bearing Virginian names, Maryland names, Connecticut names—there had evidently been many visitors. There was an invitation to dine, and another to go to the play that evening. But Abigail declined the latter. Her best friend of all might come to-night!

In truth, however, there seemed more likelihood that, "for political reasons," he would stay in Holland, awaiting her, and send their son for her as planned. Well, she would not be away, whichever came!

And besides, the mantua-maker had not yet finished the first dress!

The wind was blowing back the mails from Holland; two boats were due. Clark, a constant visitor, and Smith and Storer, no less so, brought her what news she had. Captain Lyde's boat had not yet got up the Channel. She should be glad she had landed when she did. The vessel had been damaged by a collier that ran afoul of her, and had been harried by the gales as well. Abigail knew something, from the Captain, of the perils of struggling up the Channel. It was that, indeed, which had helped to give her fortitude to land at the first opportunity.

And now, when John sent for her, she must face a journey of eighty miles to Margate; she *would* face the ocean trip to Holland; and how gladly would she go at length with John to Paris, whither the brilliant Mr. Jefferson of Virginia was on his way to form a new commission of three, with Adams and Franklin, for the purpose of making European commercial treaties.

She waited; and killed time agreeably enough with her calling and her entertaining, her exploring and shopping, her letter- and journal-writing. Mary had bidden her buy satins and silks; but Lord! they were high here—as many shillings for satins as she had given pence at home. She could not buy at these prices for the thrifty Mary. But she could tell her the prices, and the fashions.

She could not get used to the Englishwomen's jaunty air, she said, the ladies' stooping posture. She could not accustom herself to having fashion decree the very color she should wear, the kind of silk, the time for her to wear it.

"I am coming on half-way," she wrote, breezily. "I breakfast at nine, and dine at three, when at home." But, as always, she rose soon after dawn. Fashion did not forbid her doing that, for fashion did not know of it!

It was in these early morning hours, when she could be alone, that she grew impatient for John—for reunion with him; for her own house and garden and servants—a home, even if it should be in a strange country.

But she must dally with her correspondence a little longer yet —telling Mary Cranch and Betsey Shaw of mode cloaks, of muslin and sarsenet; of gauze hats, of bonnets and ribbons and the airy clothes the London ladies wore; of how they affected muslin skirts of flounced chintz with a white border, trimmed with what "looked like gartering." She sent them patterns of the new silk—"new-mown hay," to show "the tasty folks of her acquaintance." And she sent a smart London hat by Mr. Smith, who was leaving just now.

They made her walk, too, the gentlemen. Four miles in a morning—easy walking on the flat London stones, but she was no four-mile walker! It took her a day to get over it. And that evening she must go and be entertained again, by a sweet-faced hostess in a dress of "blue and white copper-plate calico, with a blue lutestring skirt, flounced; muslin apron and kerchief; hair neatly dressed but not powdered, and a dainty cap on it, with the very latest straw ribbons on hair and at breast; her fine feet in green morocco slippers."

They were all so kind—kind to the point of embarrassment, almost.

Not kind, though, making her walk like that! She was stiff and aching next day, and avoided anything like a social gathering. Her daughter had a "London cold." But even then they could not persuade the Atkinsons to leave them to dine alone, and were carried off for one more family dinner, and later to Drapers' Hall, whose beauty made her think of her niece Betsey, who loved romantic places. She must write to Betsey and to Lucy—Mary's girls.

Friday came. She added a little to her latest letter to Mary. She said she was in hopes, today, perhaps, of seeing——

"Ma'am!" A servant came running, most tremendously excited. "Oh, ma'am! Young Mr. Adams has come!"

Abigail was on her feet. Abby, also.

"Where, where, where? Where is he?"

"In the other house, Ma'am; he stopped to get his hair dressed."

"Bid him hurry—oh, bid him hurry quick!" Thus Abby.

It seemed an age. What would he look like—their Johnny? Five years since they had bid good-bye to a little lad. And now? This minute seemed five years!

The door opened once more——

This pleasant-faced young man? This tall young man?

Abigail's heart was in turmoil. She put out her hands—took them back. It could not be—and yet— His eyes!

"Mamma! O, my mamma and my dear sister!"

It was—it was!

"John! My son!"

"Johnny—my brother!"

He was so tall—so handsome! Such a man! He talked earnestly—embraced them, mother and sister, with tender vehemence.

"I should have known my sister," he said, holding her blushing at his arm's length, "in any part of the world," but he did not add the rest of his thought—that she was grown monstrous pretty; nor she that she wished to tell him the same!

"Mamma! Dearest Mamma—I cannot believe it true. And are you well? My father——"

"What of your father, John? What would he have me do? I long to go to him."

"I am to take you to him, Ma'am—as fast as may be! He cannot wait, neither! But it may be a week or more, before we can purchase a carriage and complete our plans."

A week—another week of sightseeing, of killing time! But she had her Johnny at least. She must possess her soul in patience.

"Not," she wrote to Mary, of that day's happenings, "feeling twenty years younger, as my best friend says he does, but feeling myself exceedingly matronly, with a grown-up son on one hand, and daughter upon the other, and, were I not their mother, I would say a likelier pair you will seldom see in a summer's day. You must supply words where you find them wanting, and imagine what I have left unfinished, for my letter is swelled to such a bulk that I have not even time to peruse it. Mr. Smith goes tomorrow morning, and I must now close, requesting you to make the distribution of the

little matters I send, as directed. Tell Dr. Tufts, my dear and valued uncle and friend, that I design to write to him by the next vessel.

"Particularly remember me to uncle Quincy, to Mrs. Quincy and Nancy, and to all my dear Boston friends. Tell Mr. Storer that Charles is very good to me, and that, walking with Abby the other day, she was taken for his wife. Ask him if he consents. Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson treat me like a sister. I cannot find myself in a strange land. I shall experience this, when I get to a country the language of which I cannot speak. I sincerely wish the treaty might have been concerted here. I have a partiality for this country; but, where my treasure is, there shall my heart go."

CHAPTER XLI

ECSTASY

ABIGAIL did not go to Holland.

John's letters, sent by the hand of his son, had told her that he was tied to The Hague for a further unknown number of days or weeks, and that she could come to him there. But while Johnny sought and haggled for a suitable coach for the ladies, things altered themselves somewhat. Matters straightened out in Holland unexpectedly. John Adams completed that which he had come to do, and wound up his affairs. The third member of the French commission, Mr. Jefferson, was arrived in Paris. Mr. Franklin was in somewhat poor health. Adams' support would be welcome to his friend Jefferson, newly arrived, and it was time to make the change.

So it came about that, eagerly, John rode out from The Hague, his duty there done, the new loan made some days sooner than he had anticipated; and set his face for England. . . .

So it came about that on a certain August evening, Abigail's drawing-room door—that surprising door, that had framed the surprising Johnny,—framed, this time, the greatest surprise of all. A

sturdy figure; a face paler than of yore, less rudely healthy; two trembling, outstretched arms. . . .

She thought it was his ghost—a substantial ghost!

They stood gazing at each other a moment—she in her muslin London gown and pretty, lacy cap, dark and firm and womanly, And he—so much in need of her.

"Nabby! My dearest Nabby!"

They were in each other's arms once more. . . . And the children, who had been out to the play, found surprise and joy awaiting them on their return.

They stayed only a day longer in London. Mr. Adams must be off again—and his family with him; to be sure, he would see to that! He purchased an excellent coach in town, for their permanent use; he hired a chaise for their servants, Esther and John Briesler; and in twenty-four hours they were off to Dover, obtaining horses and postilions on the way, and finding, once more, excellent lodging, and plentiful board.

Abigail was happy—happy even in spite of the tempestuous twelve hours from Dover to Calais aboard a little ship! She had the pleasantest memories of her short sojourn in England. Pleasant fields, pleasant lodging places, pleasant food, pleasant people. . . .

Little Abby was excited also. Her English memories were so sweet, and this portly stranger who was her father had proved so exactly to her liking! It was great fun to be going with him and Johnny and her mother to France, of which they expected so much.

France, however, was something of a shock. Here, in the fields they passed on the long road to Paris, cultivation was, to say the least, haphazard; the villages were mean-looking, their thatch-roofed houses rarely showing a pane of window-glass. Seven French horses pulled their coach along. They looked like common cart-horses, little Abby wrote home, and were tied with ropes and chains —no shining harness, as everywhere in England. The postilions were in rags, with huge, comic jack-boots. Was this the style of the

Ducs and Comtes? Of a truth, it was, if they would travel the highroads! As for the inns——! The difference, Abigail told her sister, between the inns of England and the inns of France was as great as the difference between Colonel Warren's famed hospitality and that of the sorriest tavern, at home. The villagers worked, to be sure—women and children, both, toiled in the fields that they passed; but where were the neat hedgerows, the orderly ranks, the English luxuriance in land-culture?

They stayed in Chantilly a while, and were off. Abigail's distaste was growing, though Paris could not be, surely, so dirt-pervaded, so slovenly.

But when they were arrived at last—

"You inquire of me how I like Paris," she wrote to her niece, Lucy Cranch. "Why, they tell me I am no judge, for that I have not seen it yet. One thing I know, and that is that I have smelt it. If I was agreeably disappointed in London, I am as much disappointed in Paris. It is the very dirtiest place I ever saw. There are some buildings and some squares, which are tolerable; but in general the streets are narrow, the shops, the houses, inelegant and dirty, the streets full of lumber and stone, with which they build. Boston cannot boast so elegant public buildings; but, in every other respect, it is as much superior in my eyes to Paris, as London is to Boston. To have had Paris tolerable to me, I should not have gone to London."

She had heard that the French were more given to hospitality than the English. She found that it was the custom for the stranger to make the first visit, or he was ignored.

Dr. Franklin, who had greeted them with a philosopher's kindliness, and was trying to make them welcome, had promised to introduce Abigail to a "genuine Frenchwoman" of his acquaintance—Madame Helvetius.

Abigail dined, in company with Madame Helvetius, at Franklin's house one evening. She describes this "genuine Frenchwoman" as a frizzled dame in a lutestring gown, with a tiffany chemise over, a straw hat on her head, with dirty gauze bound around it and tied in a bow behind.

"Ah! mon Dieu, where is Franklin?" cried this apparition. "Why did you not tell me there were ladies here?"

And ran out of the room—to the horror of Abigail! Nor did she return till Franklin came, and then she kissed him—once, twice, on the cheeks; once, again, on the forehead.

The dinner was a nightmare of discomfort for Mistress Adams. Madame kept her arm about Franklin's neck, or spread both arms, one on John's chair, who sat on her left, one on the Doctor's, who was on her right. She monopolized the conversation, and when dinner was over she threw herself upon a settee, and, writes Abigail to her sister, "showed more than her feet!" Was this indeed a genuine Frenchwomen—"one of the best women in the world," as Franklin assured her? To Abigail she seemed a very bad one, though she was sixty years old, rich, and a widow!

She had a little lap-dog, "who was," Abigail reports to Mary, "next to the Doctor, her favorite, and whom she kissed. This is one of the Doctor's most intimate friends, with whom he dines once every week, and she with him. She is rich, and is my near neighbor, but I have not yet visited her."

But it was good to be in Paris with John and their young folks —entertaining, as in London, mainly Americans, and being entertained by them; going to the play, the opera, and for walks and rides.

In Thomas Jefferson, Abigail found a choice soul—a lover of art and culture, of science and music and letters. And he found her a brilliant woman, and admired her deeply for her insight and her understanding and above all for her wise thrift, that could perform the almost impossible in a desire to make ends meet, and more—to lay aside a pittance for the future.

He could appreciate that, struggling likewise, but alone, with only the memory of a loved wife, lost in youth, and the small daughters she had left him. He and the Adamses were constant companions. Abigail and John had found a house for themselves, with space and air and a garden, at Auteuil, four miles out from the

city. Mr. Jefferson could be found there many evenings, dining, supping, entertaining and being entertained. He was a careless dresser—a careless figure altogether; six feet two; of freckled visage; his red hair often tousled; his stock awry; his coat threadbare. Like John, he was a farmer, and like him, of narrow means, narrowed further by his duties and the slenderness of his pay. Expenses weighed on both; but life did not, or duty, or art, or friendly companionship—or honor. They worked in unison, these two, and their recreation, their walks, their rides, their games of backgammon, their visits to art centers and plays and affairs of the court, they enjoyed with mutual zest.

It was a gracious house of clear white stone that Abigail ruled over here—a larger white house, more pretentious by far, than the White House in Brattle Square, of such poignant memories. Her first Boston home! The Auteuil house stood far back from the roadway, and was reached by a long stone entry, in which Abigail strolled each day. It was near enough to the beautiful *Bois de Boulogne* for her to view the swarming crowds that thronged the wooded paths on fête-days, fleeing from the filth of the city for a whiff of country air. The revelers came in carts, the carts covered with canvas shades, and equipped with benches for the party. These chariots were loaded to the driver's perch. Abigail could sit at her window and watch the dancing, listen to the gay music, smile at the cavortings—at the men with their hats tucked under their arms; the women elegantly powdered of hair, hooded or veiled with gay silk or gauze, but always bonnetless.

Her own garden was delightful, its fruit-trees weighted with blossom in season; gay with flower-beds and vegetable patches; a fine pond of fish, with a fountain in it, in the center. John, too, loved this garden, and the woods which lay beyond, in which he did his walking.

He had furnished his house at The Hague at some expense, against her coming; but when the time had come to move, he had found he could not cart his household sticks and linens the five

hundred miles by road; and they had had to rent this place with its furniture, and buy linens and china, glass and plate, and all the accessories to housekeeping, all over again.

It was a large house—larger than they needed, with an elegant salon where they held their many receptions. Between this and the dining-room was a passage, glass-doored at each end, leading to the courtyard one way and to the garden the other. The kitchen quarters lay beyond the dining-room. Upstairs, a long gallery looked on the drive and roadway through six long windows, and opposite each window was a door to a sleeping-chamber whose own windows surveyed the gardened rear.

There were mirrors everywhere. In the little boudoir that opened into the younger Abby's bedroom, mirrors entirely lined the walls. To her niece Betsey, Abigail described this room in detail.

"Why, my dear, you cannot turn yourself in it without being multiplied twenty times; now that I do not like, for being rather clumsy, and by no means an elegant figure, I hate to have it so often repeated to me. This room is about ten or twelve feet large, is eight-cornered and panelled with looking-glasses; a red and white India patch, with pretty borders encompassing it; low back stuffed chairs with garlands of flowers encircling them, adorn the little chamber; festoons of flowers are round all the glasses; a lustre hangs from the ceiling adorned with flowers; a beautiful sofa is placed in a kind of alcove, with pillows and cushions in abundance, the use of which I have not yet investigated; in the top of this alcove over the sofa in the ceiling is another glass; here is a beautiful chimney piece with an elegant painting of rural life in a country farmhouse, lads and lassies jovial and happy. This little apartment opens into your cousin's bed-chamber; it has a most pleasing view of the garden, and it is that view which always brings my dear Betsey to my mind, and makes me long for her to enjoy the delight of it with me."

But the house was to this practical lady something of an anomaly, for though mirrors might be both lavish and expensive, the tables were mere oak boards, and not a single room boasted a carpet. The floors, which Abigail detested, were of red tile, and could not be washed, but a man-servant must come with brushes

strapped to his feet, the brushes waxed, and dance over it, with questionable results for cleanliness! The dining-room floor was of stone, also red.

Abigail found herself fortunate in having her salon on the first floor. In most of the houses she visited, only the servants' quarters were here, the family eating and lounging and sleeping on the second—and in too many cases the stairs between were left so filthy that she and Abby must pick up their skirts and tread gingerly.

Living was terribly high. It was ill-luck that the Congress chose this time to economize on John's pay, and take five hundred dollars from it, already little enough; for he must have the requisite number of servants in this city of punctilious modes, and wear the fashionable clothes, and the family must have their hair dressed and powdered to the last tendril of perfection.

How could Abigail retrench? She made some of the bed and table linens, but she could not make all of their clothes; she could not make spoons and forks (and these must be silver, nothing else!), or china—or servants!

Those servants! The one would not encroach, even as a favor, on the duties of another. The coachman was for the horses and the coach alone; the gardener was busy, true enough, with his plants all day; but there must be a cook; a *maitre d'hôtel* ("His business," said Abigail, caustically, "is to purchase articles in the family; and oversee that nobody cheats but himself"); a *valet de chambre*—fortunately, Breisler would serve in that capacity; a *femme de chambre*—and fortunately, that was the faithful Esther; a *coiffeuse,* for the dressing and powdering of the ladies' hair, and for not a flicker else—"it is not de fashion!" And of course the dancing *frotteur,* to foot-brush the floors!

By a shrewd bargain Abigail did persuade her *maitre d'hôtel* to act as footman, too. She promised him a gentleman's suit of clothes instead of a livery! They were dandyish, the menials, far more so than their employers. Young Mr. Adams' *valet de chambre*

would not dream of dressing his own hair, or powdering it, though he performed both services for his youthful master. He must attend a hair-dresser, and a good one. The table-servants and the upstairs staff must be "frizzed and prinked and powdered," or they could not perform their duties. It was usual. If Abby sent for a tailor to mend a coat, he came splendidly clothed, hatless, his head a snowy creation. If Abigail called for the mantua-maker, mademoiselle came in silk gown and petticoat,

"her head in ample order," wrote Abigail for Mary's amusement, "though, perhaps she lives up five pair of stairs, and eats nothing but bread and water, as two-thirds of these people do."

Johnny helped a great deal in the matter of finding and engaging help; but secretly her large staff irked Mrs. Adams, sooner idling than helping out of their duty.

"I often think," she said, "of Swift's High Dutch bride, who had so much nastiness, and so much pride."

The French ladies that she met, in spite of the shock Madame Helvetius had given her, were in the main charming and elegant and friendly. She and John called—first, as was the custom—on the Marquise de la Fayette, who greeted Abigail with Gallic effusion, saluting her on each cheek like a long-lost friend. She took the visitor into her bedroom, and introduced Mrs. Adams to her mother and sister, who were sitting there chatting and doing fancy-work.

"I am so very glad to see you here, Madame. I love America, and the Americans, as my husband does."

She brought her children—pretty Virginia, aged seven, and George Washington, aged five—to curtsey to Abigail. There was no impression of the lady of rank. She appeared a simple, motherly person of middle-size, warm and friendly and unaffected, and this, for Abigail, betrayed her rank more surely.

And when she came to dine with a number of stylish American ladies whom Mistress Adams had asked to meet her, she came in a plain gown and petticoat, a plain kerchief, a neat cap with a white ribbon in it, and a careless dusting of rouge on her agreeable face. Nor did the diamonds and the gold watch-chains and the glittering girdle-buckles of the other ladies dismay her. She was entirely at her ease, and Abigail began to be assured that this was indeed the sign of the well-bred French lady, though the majority of them were dressed to the last degree of taste and variety. The Marquise, indeed, made Abigail wonder what necessity there was for the prodigal display that some of the American ladies thought fit to affect in their dress over here.

Time passed, in duties and entertainments and agreeable domestic life. Charles Storer was forwarding their home letters from London, for which they waited eagerly.

Johnny would ride into Paris for them, and return to face the fire of questions.

"Well; have you found the letters?"

"They are there, in truth, but I could not procure them. They would not deliver them to me at the post-office, because I carried no proof that the letters belong to the family, and I might be an impostor, for aught they knew, and they were answerable for them. I scolded and fretted, but no use."

"And you left them? Our letters? You did not carry them here?"

"They finally promised they would send them out here this evening."

How provoking to wait till evening, after they had waited for weeks already!

But evening came in due course; found John in his easychair at the table, candles near, reading Plato's Laws; Abigail opposite him by the other branched candelabra, also reading—St. John's "Letters." Abby? Thinking, merely, in a little silk chair, chin on hand. Of that lover in far-off Massachusetts—or of conquests yet to come? Johnny usually wrote or read in his own room, and he had

persuaded his mother to do much of her writing there, too, for it was pleasant, and he could help her by copying for her, so that, as she said, her letters took on a new value for herself, his writing was so great an improvement on hers!

Handsome J. Q. Adams, then, entering to them, with his elegant snowy coiffure and his stylish French-cut clothes. In his hand half a dozen sealed and ribboned packages.

His father looking up from his book, and holding out a pudgy hand to take the letters and cut them.

Storer has done them up into neat bundles, and put the bundles again into these virgin packages. John sorts them.

One for Mrs. Adams—and another. He gives them to her, and passes, his eyes on the letters, to Abby on her low chair. Four, five—six for Miss Abby; then more yet for her mother. With mock ruefulness he deplores coming off so slenderly himself. One only for him!

The elegant youth waits in the background. Nothing happens.

"Are there none for me, Sir?"

There are none for J. Q. Adams, for all his trouble. He turns up his outraged nose, and walks away; but they are all too deep in their letters to notice his mortification—or two of them are, at least; and the mother, perhaps, only smiles.

Dear Johnny! He was carried away sometimes by foolish hurt pride, but he was such a good son to her. She would miss him sorely when he went, as he would soon now, home, alone—to Harvard. He would do well there. He had talents beyond his years, and worldly experience likewise. Yet he lacked knowledge in some indispensable subjects, if he was to make a successful man. It was this that reconciled her to his leaving; and also the fact that he would be learning among his own people, in ideal cultural surroundings. He was to go next summer, and the Parisian interlude—the dinners and plays and concerts with Jefferson and with Jefferson's little favorite, sister Abby; the parties and the walks, the rides and the sights and the work—would be a memory. Pleasure was too much the business of

life here, Abigail told her old friend Mrs. Storer in Boston, writing to that good lady the feminine news.

"Catch, ere she change, the Cynthia of this minute." Thus Abigail of the plump and honest figure, despairing to compete with the wasp-waisted, wide-shouldered Paris ladies. Petticoats must match stomachers, capes must match gowns. No trimming for daytime wear. Lots of it for Court and public occasions—enormous hoops, and three-yard embroidered trains. But even the Queen was plain-dressed for every day. One must follow the modes—if one could keep pace with them—modes in hats, in caps, in handkerchiefs. Pauline, the *coiffeuse,* who despaired because she was not "so *jolie* as mademoiselle," had made even the staid Esther stylish, and both Esther and the man, Briesler, must needs wear their hair full-powdered, or suffer scorn in the servants' quarters.

It was a strange life. Were it not for the fact that John was happy—utterly happy now, despite onerous duties and pressing financial cares—she could have wished herself Johnny, to be going home. It looked as though there was a possibility, at any rate, that the arduous journey from England might have to be reversed, for there were signs that Britain was now averse to treating in Paris for future commerce. Well, John had vowed, and she with him, that naught but the final parting should sever them any more. There had been too much parting in their lives.

She tried to live the life of the Parisian lady, enjoying the play, the gardens, the books she read, but shocked to her Puritan vitals by her first view of dancing upon a stage—in the opera ballet.

"The dresses and beauty of the performers were enchanting," she wrote to her sister Cranch. "But, no sooner did the dance commence, than I felt my delicacy wounded, and I was ashamed to be seen to look at them. Girls, clothed in the thinnest silk and gauze, with their petticoats short, springing two feet from the floor, poising themselves in the air, with their feet flying, and as perfectly showing their garters and drawers as though no petticoat had been worn, was a sight altogether new to me. Their motions are as light as air, and as quick as lightning; they balance themselves to astonishment. No description can equal the reality. They are daily trained to it, from early

infancy, at a royal academy, instituted for this purpose. You will very often see little creatures, not more than seven or eight years old, as undauntedly performing their parts as the eldest among them."

But at least she was no bigoted Puritan, Abigail.

"Shall I speak a truth, and say that repeatedly seeing these dances has worn off that disgust which I at first felt, and that I see them now with pleasure? Yet, when I consider the tendency of these things, the passions they must excite, the known character, even to a proverb, which is attached to an opera girl, my abhorrence is not lessened, and neither my reason nor judgment has accompanied my sensibility in acquiring any degree of callousness."

But she did adore the opera—the music, the dresses, the beauty, grace and ease. She was busy with her dinners to the diplomatic set and to her friends from across the ocean; with dining at Mr. Jefferson's and Dr. Franklin's, drinking in the wisdom and the company of these two. The Frenchmen all were charming to her—the Marquis de la Fayette a cherished friend;—but oh, how she did wish these Paris gentlemen, at an affair, would desist from always standing, the evening through, with their swords buckled on and their little silk hats held under their arms, hiding the fire from the chilly ladies as they talked! And she could never get used to their party conversation, that was not allowed to be general, but must divide into *tête-à-tête* as though each couple had something of a private nature to talk about between them!

After these parties she would walk with John in the Tuileries garden, on the terrace under the wall, with its fountains and statues of classic scenes; or in their own sweet-smelling garden, which they loved even better.

It was eleven months since she had left home. She hoped it would be soon that she would go back there; but in her heart she knew that it would not.

In her heart she was not surprised when the British diplomatic appointment, coveted by many, foretold for many, fell to John

Adams. In her heart she was proud—so proud; and from her heart she strove to drive out all regrets.

England would mean greater social obligations, Court obligations—tactful obligations at the Court of an erstwhile enemy; and, though she loved the English life and the English countryside, Court life—and such Court life—was distasteful to her. She regretted leaving Jefferson—"one of the choice ones of the earth," she called him. She hated letting Johnny go back to America, simultaneously with their own departure for England.

They had been such a happy family, lacking only the two babies who wrote her such sturdy letters, and on whose behavior Uncle Tufts reported so favorably.

There had been such happy times, here in Paris. She describes the eve of the *jour des rois,* when they had laughingly followed the custom of the fête day and gathered, at supper's end, around the big paste pie that held a single bean. He or she who cut the slice that held the bean was king or queen. They each took a turn—Abby first, vivacious. No bean in her pie! No queendom for her! Johnny, cautious, "bisecting his paste," as his mother laughingly commented, "with mathematical circumspection." But—no kingdom for him, either.

"For me," Abigail said, when they handed the pie-knife to her, "I have no cravings for royalty,"—and slashed away at the pastry; and was not disappointed, for she was not queen either.

John, picking on a chicken-bone, had been surveying them amusedly. Now he put out his hand and seized the dish; took up the knife; hacked at the pie—and there, forsooth, was the bean.

"And thus," said John, "are kingdoms obtained."

But his throne tottered immediately. The manservant who stood by the door, solemnly watching the contest, remarked that Mr. Adams could not retain the title.

" 'T is chance, not force, Monsieur, that must win!"

Heigho!

No longer would Johnny twit his sister on the fine young

Frenchmen who came to call. No longer would he toss his head, though smilingly, when they teased him about little Nancy Quincy, who awaited him at home, and declare that "her very littleness commended her, for that a tall wife might claim superiority over him."

But everything has its brighter aspect. Abigail was glad, after all, to be leaving France, save for her friends; glad to be going back to England—when she could forget what faced her. Proud, beyond all words—and she was never given to wordiness over intimate matters for pride—that John Adams had been chosen for the first ambassador, the first minister plenipotentiary, to the Court of St. James's. It was no easy assignment. It was an honor that signified the utmost confidence in Mr. Adams' discretion.

She dined finally with Mr. Jefferson; with the Marquis de la Fayette, so well loved by, so well-informed with news from, her own country; with the Swedish Ambassador; with friends and neighbors and countrymen.

And at length it was time to leave, with John and their daughter, while Johnny sailed for home.

With a heart proud and not too reluctant, she went to take up her amazing duty as the lady of the first American minister to England.

CHAPTER XLII

PRESENTATION

MRS. ADAMS had told the mantua-maker, "No foil, mind—no tinsel. Let the dress be elegant, but plain as I can possibly appear, with decency."

Well, it was plain enough; it was undoubtedly decent; but certainly it was monstrous becoming to the Minister's lady, and well she knew it. It was of white lutestring, its overdress of white crêpe festooned with lilac ribbon and trimmed with mock point lace. The

hoop was enormous; the Court-train very narrow, but full three yards long. There was a ribbon loop for it on the left side of the dress. (No train-bearers, save for her Majesty's own garment.) Her mittened hands emerged from treble-ruffled laces. Her gorgeous cap had long lace lappets, caressing her matronly cheeks, and her neatly dressed hair—"My head," she writes, "is dressed for St. James's, and, in my opinion, looks very tasty"—had pearl pins in it, matching the ear-rings and the necklet that she wore.

The hairdresser pinned two white plumes to the side of the splendid cap.

Abigail was ready! Where was Abby?

The youthful Abby came to her, doubtless walking carefully, and trying not to appear conscious of the fact that she looked very lovely —a younger edition of her mother, save that her ribbons were white, her petticoat more showy, her flowers full-blown roses, some of them nestling against her new-dressed hair.

"Mamma—how well you look; Mamma, do I look well?"

Abigail would first turn her around, gingerly; then kiss her, careful not to spoil the stiff new attire.

"You are very sweet, my little daughter."

"There will be none sweeter." Thus Abigail's friendly neighbor, Mrs. Temple, who would, of course, be there to see the departure.

But it was nearing time. The ceremony began at two. John was already gone, in his own coach, with Colonel Smith, his Diplomatic secretary, who had been sent from home recently by the Congress. Mrs. Adams' coach awaited now, outside in the square—waited to carry Abigail Adams, farmeress, of Braintree, Massachusetts, to pay her respects to King George III, in the drawing-room of the Queen.

The footman handed them into their coach, "persons" staring from on the paving. Ho there! Off! They were away, riding slowly through Westminster, past the Abbey, up Whitehall and to the Palace.

Here were more spectators—thousands of them, gaping. Here

were gorgeous flunkeys to hand you out, to pass you through the chambers where still other onlookers thronged. They walked through, with ushers in attendance, into this lofty, picture-hung apartment and out of that; and came, at last, to a welcome halt in the anteroom, which at least was reserved for those about to be presented.

Abigail, her daughter pressing close to her, looked about. She was determined not to be flustered—not even to think how much she disliked the notion of having to come to stand in line and sue for a royal smile. . . . Ah! the Baron de Lynden—the Dutch Minister. He had paid his respects at her home. He came to converse, to bend his powdered head upon her hand. . . . There were others she knew approaching—Paris friends. And now came John, and young Colonel Smith, who took his stand by the blushing Abby.

This was no ordeal at all for the gentlemen—watching the ladies presented! John, as a Minister, had had a private audience days since, in the King's closet, where, alone save for the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he had made his address to his Majesty. The King had been markedly friendly to the American, of whose country and whose duties scandal had raved and was raving still in the Tory papers, but concerning whose person and whose personal intent and integrity even these had found nothing adverse to say.

"I thank you, sir," said the King to John in private. "I was the first, sir, and the last, to resist the notion of American independence. I will be the first to welcome independent America's representative. I am glad, sir, that your country's choice has fallen upon you."

"Well," wrote la Fayette from Paris to Abigail when he heard of it, "I have always been told that George was a great dissembler, but I never was so thoroughly convinced of it as by the reception given to the American minister!"

Her Majesty had been equally polite.

"Sir," she said, replying to the speech he had prepared, as custom demanded, "I thank you for your civility to me and my family, and I am glad to see you in this country;" and chatted a while with

him concerning his own family and his newly occupied house in Grosvenor Square.

But that had been informal compared to this—and the Tory "news-liars" had certainly been informal in their comments on the reception given to the envoy of an erstwhile enemy.

This was an ordeal little suited to a Massachusetts farmeress!

John smiled at her, reassuringly, and led her to the drawing-room.

A tall, distinguished man approached. John welcomed him, and turned to Abigail.

"I would like to present the Earl of Carmarthen to Mrs. Adams."

"I am charmed, ma'am," said his Lordship. "I have called several times, but you were away."

"Sir Clement Cotterel Donner," said John, presenting another acquaintance; and very soon they were surrounded. Other ministers swelled the small crowd—the Swedish and Polish ministers; more lords and dukes and earls.

But where were the ladies? Was this not a ladies' drawing-room!

Ah, here was one, at least, whom she knew—the Countess of Effingham, who had called on her and been exceedingly gracious. Her friendship Abigail doubly welcomed, for her husband had long since made a gesture of friendship towards Abigail's country by resigning his commission, sooner than fight against Americans.

Mrs. Adams greeted her Ladyship warmly; admired her; was presented by her, and Abby also, to the other presentees—three daughters of the Marquis of Lothian; two young and radiant brides.

There was chatter and laughter. The men gathered, conferring; the ladies, gossiping.

A hush came. A ripple, and somehow everybody was lined around the walls, making a large circle of some two hundred people. Abigail had a fleeting thought that it must be irksome beyond words to have to pass so many, and find small talk and a gracious smile for each. The faces, somehow, she wrote, later, all bore the same look—an anxious look—a look of splendidly-clad beggars seeking a

boon—the boon of a smile from majesty. . . . Rebellion came again into her heart. . . . These royalties were coming to look down on her, to patronize her. Why? By what right? Their friendly smile was her country's due, and she was here to represent her country. Therefore was she not complimenting them by being here, just as much as they were complimenting her by receiving her? Never, she felt wrathfully—never, indeed, was she destined to be any Court favorite, if it meant wearing a suppliant look like these, begging for notice. Never, assuredly, would she put her foot in here at all, again, if her country's diplomacy did not require it. But if this was the penalty of honor, she would endure it.

The lord-in-waiting entered, raised his head to make an announcement.

"Their Majesties the King and Queen; and their Royal Highnesses——"

Abigail lost his words as she looked, with mingled feelings, on the King of England.

He was tall and broadly-knit, and not uncomely. But what Abigail remarked the first was that he combined a ruddy countenance with whitish eyebrows—a combination which she and her sister, Mary, had always vowed they distrusted!

And that plain, rather shapeless woman in purple and silver, whose train a lady-in-waiting held, was the Queen; and those two pretty girls behind her, in black and silver, with silver netting, and so many diamond pins in their hair, must be the Princess Royal and the Princess Augusta. At least *they* were shapely, she thought; though they shared white eyebrows with the King!

His Majesty was approaching—circling one way around the expectant throng, while the Queen and her daughters circled the other.

Abigail had been told what to do. As the King arrived before her, and the lord-in-waiting, the Earl of Onslow, murmured, "Mrs. Adams," she drew off her right glove and, curtseying, presented her hand for royalty's salute. But royalty had reserved greater favor

for her than the smile she had seen bestowed on those he had noticed already.

Bending forward, the King saluted her on the cheek.

"Have you taken a walk today?" he enquired.

"No, Sire." She could have told him that she had been all the morning getting ready for this ordeal.

"Why? Don't you love walking?"

"I fear I am rather indolent in that respect."

He bowed, and passed to the next in line. Two hundred odd pieces of small-talk! Abigail had been standing for two hours more before the Queen reached her—a blonde woman who eyed her with no special friendliness, and seemed not a little embarrassed—which was nothing to what Abigail felt.

Curtsey.

"Mrs. Adams, have you got into your house? Pray, how do you like the situation of it?"

She replied that she was charmed with Grosvenor Square, and happy in her house, and suddenly she saw that the Princess Royal was gazing at her with compassion.

"And are you not much fatigued, Mrs. Adams?" asked the fair-skinned girl with the diamonds in her hair. "It is such a very full drawing-room."

The Princess Augusta was talking with Abby.

"Were you ever in England before?"

"Yes," Abby answered, and lost her tongue, overcome with embarrassment.

"And was it long ago?" the Princess asked of Abigail. "I suppose it was when your daughter was very young."

They were smiling girls, these princesses—indeed, all four royalties did their best, with ease and affability, to put one out of one's strangeness. But, praise Heaven, at last the ordeal was over. Abigail and her daughter were free to look around. Well, fine feathers certainly did not always make fine birds! My Lady Salisbury and my Lady Talbot looked elegant, but the rest, though their costumes

might have cost more than Abigail's, did nothing to eclipse her. Where were the boasted English beauties? She had not found so much beauty here as she knew of in America. Fair complexions, most of the women had, and tolerable figures, but where was one to compare with Mrs. Bingham, or Mrs. Platt, or the ravishing Miss Hamilton, of Philadelphia? The much-cried Duchess of Devonshire had proved to be masculine of appearance; Lady Salisbury far more pleasing, but "her complexion bad"; and even my Lady Talbot was not a Mrs. Bingham. Only one really lovely girl had Abigail seen—the daughter of Mr. Dana, a brother of her friend in Boston—but even *she* might owe a lot of her beauty to her handsome American father, and not to her English mother!

It was over. Thrice thankful, Abigail, to get back to Grosvenor Square!

They had not found room at the Adelphi hotel on their return to London. London was full, with countrymen flocking for occasions—the birthday of the King, the music-festival of Handel's "Messiah" at Westminster Abbey. And Parliament was sitting, which brought the members home.

They had gone to the Bath Hotel, in Westminster, because they could find no other place, and because it was convenient to the Court end of the city and all those foreign ministers and the lords and earls of the English aristocracy who came forthwith to make their compliments. But Abigail had begun at once to look for a house, and after two weeks of looking had found this one, in Grosvenor Square, for the moderate price of £200, and had induced the person who rented it to her to do a little painting and put it into order.

Now she was busy indeed, waiting for her furniture from Holland, settling it in when it came, interviewing servants. (How greatly she missed her son in these details of character searchings, and hirings!) She would not bother John with any domestic cares, beyond the necessary procuring of horses. His hands were full enough, and his brain, of care. Letters, petitions, pleas poured in on him,

from Americans in distress, or from those who represented themselves as such; for money, assistance of every kind. Young Smith was hard put to it to sort the humbug from the real; Mr. Adams to deal with that which was genuine. The merchants had poured over here, it seemed, with the coming of peace; had established their credit wherever they could, regardless of whether they could sustain it; and many of them—too many—were coming to grief. It was hard enough. John was finding Britain still unready to establish trade relations—unwilling, even, to send out materials to a country that the Tory papers vowed was already tiring of independence and yearning to come back under the old dominion. Britain was treating the American minister politely, and hating the American nation as bitterly as the enemies of America, both here and there, could make her.

"They are more actuated by these ideas in their whole system toward us, than by any generous plans, which would become them as able statesmen and a great nation," wrote Abigail to her son John Quincy Adams, at Harvard. "They think to effect their plans by prohibitory acts and heavy duties. A late act has passed, prohibiting the exportation of any tools of any kind. They say they can injure us much more than we can them, and they seem determined to try the experiment. Those who look beyond the present moment, foresee the consequences, that this nation will never leave us until they drive us into power and greatness that will finally shake this kingdom. We must struggle hard first, and find many difficulties to encounter, but we may be a great and powerful nation if we will. Industry and frugality, wisdom and virtue, must make us so. I think America is taking steps towards a reform, and I know her capable of whatever she undertakes. I hope you will never lose sight of her interests; but make her welfare your study, and spend those hours, which others devote to cards and folly, in investigating the great principles by which nations have risen to glory and eminence; for your country will one day call for your services, either in the cabinet or field. Qualify yourself to do honor to her."

CHAPTER XLIII

ROMANCE

LITTLE ABBY—and it was not alone her mother's prior right to the more dignified name that had earned for her the familiar prefix. In truth she never grew to more than five foot one!—found life gay. And well she might, for she was both pretty and wise. With a feminine counterpart of her father's honest visage, she pleased the eye. With her great, serious eyes and her petulant small mouth, her massed hair powdered and well-curled and flowing a little to her shoulders, she was attractive. Also—beyond doubt in a daughter of John and Abigail—she was intelligent.

But Abigail hardly realized that her little Abby was really grown-up till William Stephens Smith came to town to be John Adams' diplomatic secretary.

There had been young men—there had even been the talked-of pledge with young Tyler—but about them all there had been the unsuitability and impermanence of mere childhood sweethearting. Her mother, at least, had felt that little Abby was still a child.

There had been older men on this side of the water to spoil the minx, to listen to her views, to lavish gifts on her. Jefferson had doted on her from the first, and took her with him sightseeing and exploring, to concerts and to plays; hunted treasures for her; discussed with her, grave-eyed and serious, the arts and sciences.

There had been young men always at the house in Auteuil; there were young men always here in Grosvenor Square. Abby seemed to enjoy their adulation—to revel in it as she reveled in all this life which was, for her, a round of pleasures interspersed with small duties that involved nothing more unpleasing than the sewing of dainty kerchiefs as gifts for her cousins in America, or the putting into practice of that inherited predilection for letter-writing. She wrote to her cousins, Lucy and Betsey and William Cranch,

and to the little Shaws; to her Aunts Elizabeth and Mary, the mothers of these; to her ancient grandmother Adams, and her uncles Adams and Smith; profusely to her girl-friends—and maybe, at last, to a disappointed sweetheart. . . . She wrote of books and plays, courts and courtiers; of how greatly her mother relished a "dish of politics" with the great men and women of her circle; and how much she herself preferred the more social amenities.

She had much to write of. The English princesses hailed her as contemporary; the ladies of the Court made much of her, for she was merry—no longer the sensitive little girl who "didn't talk much."

But for serious lovers, at nineteen, she had seemed by no means ready, until Colonel Smith arrived on the scene.

Admiration then was mutual. The young secretary found Mr. Adams' daughter quite irresistible. At court affairs, at functions which his duties and his social standing allowed him to attend with them, he trailed her, hiding his impatience at the demands of others; making increasing demands of his own on her time.

He could boast of a distinguished career, this Colonel of barely thirty years of age. Studying law before the outbreak, he had cast it aside when the Revolution came, and entered the ranks of the 13th Massachusetts Regiment, to become, before long, a commander. Under Sullivan he had served in the hottest encounters; and from Sullivan's command he had gone to Washington's, and finally become his aide, and a distinguished one. This choice of him for the British post was itself a signal honor; others awaited him when he should return home.

No mean catch, even for a little Abby Adams. And Abby, though she thrilled at the life of the English Court, and of the French Court, also, was heart and soul American.

So suitors had come, and suitors gone; and now came the young American, Smith.

And Abigail the daughter grew to womanhood before her mother's eyes

Mr. Adams called him "Abby's knight,"—but it was not until a word, a look, a blush suddenly gave the whole secret away, that Abigail realized, with a clutching at her heart, that she was about to lose her girl. William had spoken,—indeed, was speaking now—to Papa. . . .

William was coming at it bluntly, as suited John. Tall and straight and comely, of military mien and brilliant legal mind, he was asking John Adams for the hand of his daughter.

Years before, in the town of Boston, John had faced possible calumny in the plea of the British Captain Preston to be defended from patriot wrath for his part in the Boston Massacre; on another occasion, he had faced possible death in the order of the Congress that he proceed forthwith, under the noses of British ships at anchor off Rhode Island, to France and anti-English treaties. In neither case had he hesitated in his decision. He certainly did not hesitate now, when it came to his little girl's happiness, even though he might not be altogether prepared to view her as ready for marriage at all.

He knew young Smith most intimately from constant contact in ticklish diplomatic work; he knew him for an upstanding, idealistic but practical young man; and what was more, he was not, as a matter of fact, altogether as unprepared as Abigail had been, for he had long seen how it was with his aide, though he had joked about it.

So he took his future son-in-law by the hand. . . .

They were married most brilliantly, by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of St. Asaph, on the twelfth of June of the year 1786, when "little Abby" was nearing twenty-one; her William ten years older. And to the rôle of daughter of the American Minister, Abby added that of wife of the American Minister's military secretary, giving up the name her father had bestowed upon her, and taking up the name her mother had relinquished when she herself had married—completing the cycle—Abigail Smith to Abi-

gail Adams; Abigail Adams to Abigail Smith. She was happy, little Abby.

It had been a brilliant season, and an overwhelmingly busy one for John in office and for his wife at the social end of affairs—to say nothing of Abby's wedding. For John Adams, the work was hard and equally disheartening. Britain was cold, if not to him, unqualifiedly to his cause. He was kicking his heels again, trying to bring about a trade agreement, when he was not inundated by the pleas and the distresses of his stranded countrymen.

For Abigail, the daily round was hard as well, and irksome. For the Birthday, for the mourning for the Princess Amelia, for all the Court occasions, she must don stiff clothes and play the Diplomatic Minister's lady—a part which ill suited her. She met the Prince of Wales, and found him personable and friendly, but "inclined to the bottle." She met the youngest princess—a gawky schoolgirl. She met Carmarthen again, and Pitt, and found them human and sympathetic beyond their fellows.

She must fix her house and make her plans for diplomatic dinners to the ministers of all the foreign powers, at which his Lordship of Carmarthen presided; and she must take herself and Abby off elsewhere to dine that night, for no ladies were admitted. An American friend, who had been on a voyage to the West Indies, had come back with a present for her—a fine turtle, weighing no less than a hundred and fourteen pounds. Their Excellencies should be treated to dressed turtle! And his Excellency from America could keep a little needed money in his pocket!

It was no sinecure, the American diplomatic post in England in that day. Later it might be, wrote Abigail doubtingly, but not then. She comforted herself, as ever, with her books, reading Richardson and admiring him above all other novelists; feeling herself, as she said, her thoughts diverted from personal pettiness to other men's great thoughts, nearer divinity for the reading. She had her letter-writing, and strove to follow in it the precepts of the masters of her youth who had thought letter-writing worthy the name of a literary

art. And she took joy, as ever, in finding verse and quotation to give her epistles point.

She wrote to Thomas Jefferson of her attendance at the Abbey, to listen to the music of the "Messiah," of Handel, then new; of how she had thought of him, her friend of Paris days, who so loved the grand in music. A woman behind her had talked incessantly throughout the rendering, but had been unable wholly to spoil Abigail's profound pleasure in its beauty!

She went to see Mrs. Siddons. This she wrote to Mary—that even taking into consideration that the great actress was at this time in a certain delicate condition, and that the plays of Shakespeare in which she appeared were gloomy and rough of word, her art was noble, stirring to the last degree. . . .

She must entertain the Ministers' ladies; the Ministers themselves; lords and ladies of the Court; thrice-welcome American friends. One of the last-named took her to see a portrayal of General Warren's death at Bunker Hill, that Mr. Trumbull had made.

It moved her beyond words. She came near, indeed, she confessed, to swooning when she saw again that scene which, viewed so tragically from the distance of her hill, had become for her in memory the very symbol of tragic pain.

Massachusetts!

With all its burdened memory of sorrow, she yearned to be back there—out of courts and ceremonies, away from words and favors—a farmer's wife again!

CHAPTER XLIV

DALLIANCE

THE water in the silver urn bubbled, spat and boiled. Abigail rose and went to the laden breakfast-table, and busied herself with the chocolate-making, with filling the silver teapot and letting down the ball of leaves to suffuse in the heated water.

They sat. John passed his cup; and Abigail thought, wonderingly, of the son who used to share their breakfast-table. He had not written for so long. Surely there would be a letter from him today! She hoped his health was indeed improving—that he was caring for himself, and working fewer hours, as sister Cranch assured her he had promised to do, after suffering a near breakdown through too great study.

Mr. Spiller came, his hands very full of packages, his body bowing with dignity, as ever. Mr. Spiller was the butler.

He approached John's chair.

"Mr. Church's compliments to you, sir, and he has brought you this packet, but could not wait upon you today, as he was obliged to go out of town."

A fig for breakfast! Or not even a fig, for it went back as it had entered, untouched. Letters from Johnny at last!

"Oh, I am so glad—so glad!"

He was well. He was contented. He was succeeding in his studies. His mother had *known* that a letter would come today.

Her heart grew light. Gayly she prepared for her day's round of engagements. At one of the innumerable ladies' routs that afternoon, she played cards with a woman who set a high game with the very evident intention of winning; but Abigail played her very best whist—or something better, for she was no card enthusiast—and won the woman's money, and chuckled secretly in glee; for she was happy and relieved. She had been worried over her eldest son, and that worry had colored everything else. Now her relief made everything rosy. Mr. Jefferson had written her that week, deploring the cruel slanders that attacked John in all the English Tory papers; and still more that the foolish printers of America were reprinting these calumnies in the papers at home. What could they hope to accomplish of good by giving larger circulation to such slanders—though Abigail was not unaware that there were many in America who would enjoy the calumnies as much as those in England. Well, at least the attacks were open; she could now find consolation in

that. John Adams had had to contend so many times with secret enemies, which had been worse. At least he now had finer friends, perhaps, than at any time in his life before, if not fewer enemies. Jefferson was a friend of friends, helping with advice, and seeking it; giving and earning the utmost confidence. They both regretted now that the English Channel divided them, and that they must carry on their intercourse by letter.

But she must be dressing herself for a ball, as usual! This night's was at the house of the French Ambassador, the Comte d'Adhemar —a grand affair.

A fine house—far finer than St. James's. A finer-dressed, better-looking crowd, also. Perhaps it was her mood that made Abigail enjoy the Comte d'Adhemar's ball so much. The ladies pleased her eye, in their tiffany coats, their beads and flowers, their hats turned up at the side with diamond loops. Here was English beauty at its best, and French, too, made more beautiful still by the flattering light from countless lusters. For herself, she wore her full-dress cap, with a wreath of flowers in it, and a pair of black and blue feathers ("half a guinea a piece, my dear Lucy, but you need not tell of it!"); and her pearls, of course; a blue demi-saison with a satin stripe, a sack and petticoat trimmed with black lace, and wreaths of black velvet ribbon spotted with steel beads; a full-dress handkerchief, and a bouquet of roses.

And at the least, she looked better than the old Duchess of Bedford, who was seventy-six and had no hair, but had filled her head-cushion with diamonds!

And Abby looked so sweet, dancing her feet off, in spite of a heavy cold, in her little Leghorn hat with its pink ribbons, brim turned up in the prevailing fashion, and the roses against her hair. Her gown and coat were pink, also, of fine Chamberi gauze. But the cold won the day at last, and she came to her mother sniffing, and begged her to come home.

Writing of a certain gawky, mannish-appearing young woman of aristocratic birth who also attended this ball, Mrs. Adams com-

ments, "I was obliged frequently to recollect that line of Dr. Young's, 'Believe her dress; she's not a grenadier.'" . . .

Watching Abby's enjoyment made Abigail long for her nieces at home. Frequently she went to the shops and hunted out some pair of gifts—garments or trinkets, to send to the girls who were almost as dear to her as her own.

But the exile grew more bearable. She was traveling about the country. Mr. Adams, with Mr. Jefferson, who was here now on the business of that lingering British commercial treaty, had already taken a tour of England's lovely gardens. John's first parting from his Abigail since they had met in London two years ago. But at least they could look back on a longer period spent together than any other of their married life.

His situation, and Jefferson's also, were doubtful. England would not treat. The cold shoulder came plainly into evidence with Jefferson's first presentation to the King. And the commission of the ministers to make the European agreements was on the point of expiring. Moreover, the Congress at home had not, in any case, the power to organize or regulate commerce, even after the treaties were made.

John whiled away the time by travel, journeying with Jefferson to Edgehill and Worcester—where, it may be mentioned in passing, Mr. Adams characteristically chided the Englishmen he met for not holding more sacred a hill on which their ancestors had fought for freedom!

Later, John took Abigail to Holland, the country of his fine achievement and great honor. Holland was being little mentioned in new-fledged histories; little recognized where France was lauded. But Abigail knew, if anyone, the part that Holland had played in America's salvation. She knew what chances the debt to France would have had, without the aid of Holland——

John introduced her to his many Dutch friends, and she seized the opportunity of viewing for herself the spirit of liberty struggling toward vigor in a land new from the throes of its own revolution,

and facing grave danger of further carnage before salvation could be reached.

The people were pleasant, kind to them and admiring—a contented, well fed people, on the whole. She visited the Amsterdam Exchange, and heard the thunderous buzzing of finance; Rotterdam, Delft, The Hague, Leyden, Haerlem, Amsterdam, Utrecht; Scheveling, whence King Charles had sailed; and Zest, as Moravian as Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, which John had described to her long ago. She saw the famous glass pictures at Gouda—stained glass windows depicting the scriptures, and reaching from floor to roof of the Church. She took a day's trip to Saardam, where the Czar Peter had had his carpenter's shop. She explored museums and galleries and public buildings; and the Prince of Orange's house at The Hague. The Prince was in enforced retirement at Loo; hence Abigail did not meet him; but she dined at the British Ambassador's, and supped with the French Ambassador, and loved the quaint flat country, with its colorful brick houses, its wadded, quaint people, and its gayly painted woodwork, disapproving only of the fact that they painted their milkpails too!

She wrote to Johnny a particular account of all this, and especially of her visit to The Hague, where someone had said that, had she been dressed in Master Johnny's clothes, she could have been taken for him.

" 'Years excepted,' he should have added;" commented Abigail; "but that was a mental reservation."

Sister Shaw was writing of the singing of American birds; of the prattle of her children; of how good and manly Abigail's younger boys were striving to be, in emulation of their older brother. Abigail's heart ached to be back with them.

But it could not be, as yet. Very well, then, she would be off again, and no sooner had she returned to London than off again she was. She rode with John to Windsor. She flitted, with a party of friends, to Bath, leaving Mr. Adams in London, occupied not too zestfully, but in a serious business enough. The American States

were rising against themselves. There was disunion, disorganization, throughout, but particularly in Massachusetts. John Adams, realizing the danger in which his country stood, as perhaps few others could realize it, was gathering information, examples, precedents—to show his people the pitfalls, the irreparable ruin that lay beyond unbalanced power. The American Government must be strengthened. At present it had no power at all, to speak of, if riots such as had taken place in Massachusetts could be suffered unchecked, and moderators could plead unheeded. Moderation must have support, to save America after the war. And if John Adams was unable to persuade England to work with America, at least he might, from this distance and by virtue of his international experience, persuade America to work for herself.

CHAPTER XLV

HOMEWARD BOUND

"MY dearest Friend," wrote John Adams, from London, to Abigail in Bath,

"This moment, returning from Mr. Bridgen's, where I had been to deliver him a letter to you, written this morning, I found your very acceptable favor of the 23rd. I am very glad you are so well situated, so much pleased with your journey and present accommodations. Don't be solicitous about me. I shall do very well. If I am cold in the night, and an additional quantity of bed clothes will not answer the purpose of warming me, I will take a virgin to bed with me. Ay! a virgin.

"What? Oh! Awful! what do I read?

"Don't be surprised. Do you know what a virgin is? Mr. Bridgen brought me acquainted with it this morning. It is a stone bottle, such as you buy with spruce beer and spa water, filled with boiling water, covered over or wrapped up in flannel, and laid at a man's feet in bed. An old man, you see, may comfort himself with such a virgin as much as David did with Abishag, and not give the least jealousy even to his wife, the smallest grief to his children, or any scandal to the world. Tell Mr. Bridgen, when you see him, that I am

indebted to him for this important piece of knowledge, which I would not sell for a great deal of money.

"Tell Colonel Smith I am half disposed to be almost miffed with him, for going off without giving me his letter about the Indians; and what completes the mischief is, that he has all the books locked up in his room. Pray him to write me if it is possible to get at the letter or the books; both are what I want. My love to Abby Smith and her knight, and to all the party. Mr. Shippen is with you ere now. He was so good as to pick a bone with me once, and Mr. Cutting is very good. We now talk politics all alone, and are much cooler and more rational than when we dispute in company.

"Yours forever,

"JOHN ADAMS."

But Mr. Adams was only comforting himself, and hiding his longing for Abigail's return from the trip to Bath, and puffing up a little brave anger at the well-liked bridegroom for his piece of forgetfulness. It was time that young man came out of his love-dream, after six whole months!

Of a truth, London was a place to get away from at this moment. The warmth at Court had never been more for them than a hothouse warmth—forced and artificial, because they knew well enough that George and Charlotte bore them no real liking. Indeed, the Queen had done nothing, after that first slight thawing, to hide her coldness toward Abigail Adams, whom Court visits irked enough already. And now the mourning for a dead princess made the atmosphere more gloomy, and the fact that her Highness had mischievously willed her worldly fortune, not to his Highness of Wales, as had been hopefully expected, but to her German nephews, did nothing to clear the air!

Further, the news from home was depressing. Money, that bane, might do a lot, if it could be gotten; but rational guidance, if that could be found and wielded, would do more. John thought of his native State incessantly. And his wife was thinking of it no less, and taking her country's bad news as much to heart as that personal blow that reached them now, of good Aunt Tufts' demise.

John was glad that Abigail went off with her party for this

pleasure-jaunt. Dear soul, she hated Courts and mincing as much as he, and would never be truly content, though she were happy enough merely to be with him, till they sailed at length for home.

No immaculate virgin bottle was going to console him, though, for the missing presence! He wrote to her every day, and most days to his daughter and his secretary. And when there was news from home, and it was good enough, he rejoiced, and so informed her. And young Colonel Smith, of the pleasant party in Bath, would raise his glass at the dinner table, and glance across at the gracious lady who smiled at him from the table-head.

"I give you a toast, ma'am! Common sense to the common people!"

But when they returned to town, it was the Birthday, and there were more Court functions, and more new dresses and jewels and feathers that they could ill afford. She wished she could buy her things in Boston, and ship them here. She paid many times over for every separate article. And every ship that sailed for home, with a friend or acquaintance bearing letters, bore also her wishes that home would call her and John, for good and all. She was sated with this life, that taxed her both financially and physically. She wanted to be home.

The letters that came did not make her any the more patient. Was it for this that a bloody war had been waged? Was it to incur a new yoke—a more cruel one still—that the old had been cast aside in tears and agony? Was it to brawl among themselves, and fight for destruction of new-won liberties, that Americans had flung free of overseas tyranny?

In a year John's commission would expire. They would go home gladly. He had already given to Congress his determination to resign at the given time, if he might not return before.

"I have learned to know the world and its values;" Abigail wrote to Mary, "I have seen high life; I have witnessed the luxury and pomp of state, the power of riches and the influence of titles, and have beheld all ranks bow before them as the only shrine worthy of worship. Notwithstanding this, I

feel that I can return to my little cottage, and be happier than here; and, if we have not wealth, we have what is better—integrity. . . ."

John's pen, as ever, was restless, and he was finishing his "Defense of the American Constitutions"—to be sent to his country as a part of his contribution towards internal peace.

News of strife again came coupled with news of personal loss. Brother Shaw had passed away; Elizabeth was widowed, none too well-positioned, with two young children.

Their own Johnny was now emerged from Harvard College a distinguished graduate, in company with his cousin, William Cranch, who was also destined for the law.

Johnny!

"The curtain rises before him," thus his mother, "and instead of Peace waving her olive-branch, or Liberty seated in a triumphal car, or Commerce, Agriculture, and Plenty, pouring forth their stores, Sedition hisses, Treason roars, Rebellion gnashes her teeth, Mercy suspends the justly merited blow, but Justice strikes the guilty victim. Here may the scene close, and brighter prospects open before us in future."

She was keeping herself and her mind occupied. Mr. Jefferson's daughter, Polly, had come from Virginia to enter a European convent, and Jefferson had asked Abigail to entertain his child for a while until he could receive her. She was a sweet little creature of eight, who had lived with an aunt in Virginia, and loved her dearly. Now she grew to love in like degree, with all her warm, motherless little heart, this kindly lady who looked after her in London. She wept bitterly when at last she had to go away; and the household, which had grown to love her also, for her bright spirits, was as sad to part with her.

After her departure, Abigail traveled with John to Devonshire, to visit some of Mr. Cranch's relatives. Little Abby was engrossed with a brand-new baby, whose name was John—a new John to hold the center of the family stage.

They went by way of Winchester, where Abigail discovered a coat of arms of the ancient de Quincys, that bore unquestionable resemblance to a certain crest of which Grandfather Quincy had used to be so proud. It brought to her memory many things—a genealogical table with which she had played in the mansion as a child; her grandmother's anger when Edmund Quincy had borrowed it and forgotten to give it back. She was by no means loth to trace an ancestor among the signers of Magna Charta. . . .

She went to divine service in the rare old Gothic cathedral, a relic of the Conqueror's days.

Southampton next—a pretty seaport town. Here Abigail, for the first time in her life, sampled sea bathing, robing herself, in a covered booth, with an oil-cloth cap, a flannel bathing-gown and a pair of socks. A delightful experience! She was sure such a pastime would be welcome in Boston's summer weather, and healthful too. . . .

From Southampton they rode to Weymouth—familiar name! A town of hills like her home-place—a tiny seaport, a sleepy village; in the main a summer resort.

And finally they reached Devon—a garden of Eden, with loamy soil, emerald grasses, golden wheat, white-washed houses and a vivid blue sea. But poverty, here, was rampant; overlords rich in comfort; vassals housed in "crumbling, airless shacks, with rags and sticks for furnishings, and as little food as pence." Where were the fruits of industry, the bodily comfort, at least, of workers in her native land?

They passed to Axminster, home of the carpet industry. She saw it in working trim, housed in the plainest factories, women and children weaving the carpets to amazing beauty—seamless carpets, to be sold at one of the two staple prices—eighteen shillings a square yard, or twenty-four.

At Axminster they met brother Cranch's kin, numbering among them poets and philosophers, grocers and shoemakers. The visitors were welcomed and made much of. Exeter, Plymouth, Kingsbridge

they saw under the guidance of their hosts, and returned through Bristol, through dreaming Oxford, through Woodstock and through Blenheim, whose castle, the seat of the Duke of Marlborough, presented by his country in recognition of his great services, held Abigail entranced. Writing to her nieces of this, and of the entrancing gardens, she could hardly, later, curb her pen, so much of joy had they given her.

They came back to London, and to bad news from Holland. The Prussians had intimidated the Netherlands States, and France was standing by with such a friendly intent as to anger England. It looked gravely like an international fracas again, made more ominous by the untimely death of the statesman Vergennes.

England threatened France, but France held her peace this time; and Holland subsided also to peace once more; and the time drew near at last for the Adamses to sail for home.

John went to Holland once again, to take his leave of the States General, the Prince and Princess, the court. . . .

And while he was there, an idea came to Abigail in London, anxious for her own land—anxious to help it to peace and to prosperity. . . . The idea germinated, grew in a sudden light. . . . She set to work, and it grew some more. And when the plan was fully grown she wrote to Thomas Jefferson in Paris. And he, having read her letter, followed John post-haste to Amsterdam. . . .

"Well, ma'am, you have put off your own journey! If you should meet southwesters on the coast of America," cried John vigorously, "and have your voyage prolonged three weeks by it, remember it is all your own intrigue which has forced me to open this loan. I suppose you will boast of it as a great public service."

Well, she might. If John was the only man who knew the ropes of negotiating a loan from peaceful Holland, the friend of America, was this not an opportunity too great to let go by? Might not a further loan solve a lot of America's internal troubles—the rumblings of discontent? If speaking to statesmen and getting a few

ropes pulled and urging the ready Jefferson to carry the plan to John would bring America a means of mending, she would do it, and never mind the breezes!

"I thought myself dead," wrote John, reproachful, "and that it was all over with me as a public man; but I think I shall be forced, after my decease, to open an additional loan. At least, that is Mr. Jefferson's opinion. . . ."

But she knew he was dissimulating, and so she made her plans happily enough, trying to forget that she must leave her daughter and son-in-law and the baby behind her when she left. There would be another baby before Abby sailed for home.

Jefferson had called for money to meet the United States' debts and preserve the United States' credit for two years at least, till the new government should have had time enough to gather a revenue from judicious taxes. And John Adams, caught in Holland by the conspiracy of his wife and his friend, would carry the new loan through. Meanwhile, Abigail was packing joy in with her clothes and her gifts.

Hey! for Falmouth on the twenty-first of March! Hey! for the voyage and the homecoming at last!

It seemed too good to be true.

CHAPTER XLVI

WHIRLIGIG

BUT they went home—at last!

And not to chaos, as they now knew. In September the Constitution of the United States had been framed by a convention charged with its preparation; signed by the president of that convention, Mr. George Washington, late Commander of the Forces; and ratified by a majority of the States.

They went home—to babies grown big, a first-born grown to full manhood; to sisters, relatives and friends. But if they thought of peaceful farm life, of fields and plows and cooking—— Not for long, John and Abigail! The months that came were a whirl of happenings—politics and honors; fêtes and adjustments; of meeting Abby and William and the two grandchildren; of a journey to New York for Abigail, to settle them there, where William Smith was domiciled in a long, low house by the river*; of growing acquainted with his country's affairs for John.

The Confederation of thirteen States passed into the discard; a new Union saw the light.

And two men, who had hoped to spend the rest of their days on plantation and farm respectively, found themselves pledged to the limelight still—found themselves on the road to New York, the seat of the first United States Congress.

One was George Washington, gentleman-planter of Virginia, soldier and statesman, patriot of patriots, unanimously chosen first President of the United States of America.

The other was John Adams, farmer, lawyer, Minister to Britain, signer of the Peace Treaty, negotiator of international finance; and now George Washington's Vice-President.

CHAPTER XLVII

OFFICE

ONE significant happening that had taken place slowly but surely during the years of John Adams' absence from home was the rise of young Alexander Hamilton, the protégé and aide of Mr. Washington. Throughout the slightly amateurish initial elec-

* The house still stands, on East 61st Street, close to the East River. It is now the headquarters of the Colonial Dames.

tion of the government of the United States of America, his hand could be discerned at many points, and in none so plainly as in the surprisingly small plurality by which John Adams won to the Vice-Presidency. It was surprising in view of Mr. Adams' services to his country, and of the vote of recognition of the greatness of these services which it had been one of the last acts of the late Congress to pass. Not so surprising, though, if it were known that certain members, only too ready to give credence to the criticisms of John's European achievements that had poured through the Tory press and from John's enemies in France and at home, had at first thrown the commendatory resolution out of Congress, and that only the forces of facts and fairness, which were of irresistible strength in this case, had pushed it through inevitably.

Young Hamilton personally had no grudge against John Adams as yet, but there was nothing in his astute mind to recommend the lavishing of too much confidence or too much future foundation for power on any one man except his patron and friend, whose own unanimous election to the Presidency was a matter for no doubt whatsoever. There was no voting for a Vice-President as such. The greatest number of electoral votes won the Chief Magistracy; the second greatest, second place. It could not have been in Hamilton's mind that there was any danger of a dead heat, or even of a close-run race; but it did seem to him politic to curb a little the public confidence in Adams. Therefore he used his political influence to curb it, taking advantage of the lack of coördination that yet reigned among the parties. Had the Federalists been organized on the side of the new constitution, they must have been solid for Adams as Vice-President; but they were as little unified as were those who opposed the articles. So personal prejudices were played upon, and with success. John Adams found himself in, but with a very slender margin, and with a colleague powerful in the deliberations of the government. Moreover, Hamilton stood committed to a lack of confidence towards Adams which could not fail to put the latter on his guard, even if that irascibility with which John's critics

charged him in these later years did not yet bring him to an aggressive dislike of the younger man.

John Adams had never sought this office, or any public seat; nor sought to avoid it either.

"My mind has balanced all circumstances," he had written to his "dearest friend" but recently, while she had been at New York, "and all are reducible to two articles—vanity and comfort. I have the alternative in my own power. If they mortify my vanity, they give me comfort. They cannot deprive me of comfort without gratifying my vanity. . . ."

And now, with Abigail back at the farmhouse, he found himself riding to New York, deprived, for a while, of that which meant comfort to him, but gratified, or he would not have been human, by the esteem that greeted him everywhere. At every tavern and wayside inn, at every place where they must stop to change their horses, to eat or to sleep, a throng awaited, showering gifts, congratulations, cheer. At Hartford a deputation of the manufacturers met him, and begged him to accept a gift of homespun broadcloth for a suit of clothes. At New Haven, less tangible but as grateful honor awaited him in the form of the freedom of the city. As his party neared each town, the corporation or the townsmen rode out to meet them; and when they took their leave, rode out with them, too, a little on their way.

At Horseneck,* near to Rye, an escort of New York State militia met them, and conducted the new Vice-President with ceremony into New York Town.

The ride had eased his mind, made sore by Hamilton's unjust machinations. When he went to the Chair of the Senate, his tongue was in its happiest vein. In accepting that which he smilingly termed "a respectable situation," he did so in a speech so auspicious as to win for himself an honest respect at the start of his governmental career, at least.

But life was, even now, not entirely filled with public office.

* Now a part of the town of Rye.

"My dearest Friend," he wrote to one without whom life was lacking, "I have received yours of the 5th. If you think it best, leave Thomas at college, but I pray you to come on with Charles, as soon as possible. As to the place, let my brother plough and plant as he will, as much as he will. He may send me my half of the butter, cheese, etc., here. As to money to bear your expenses, you must, if you can, borrow of some friend, enough to bring you here. If you cannot borrow enough, you must sell horses, oxen, sheep, cows, any thing at any rate rather than not come on. If no one will take the place, leave it to the birds of the air and beasts of the field, but at all events break up that establishment and that household. . . ."

He had taken a house on the North River, about a mile out of town, and was waiting for her to furnish it.

Abigail loved that house on sight, and ever after—that picture-house on the peaceful borders of the Hudson. It stood on a hill—Richmond Hill *—at the end of an avenue threaded with forest trees and luxuriant shrubberies. The river caressed its grounds, and beyond the waters lay the beautiful Jersey country, ripe with harvest now. Behind were fields, green grass, and feeding kine. Before them, the city, across the trees and the gently swelling land. There were flowers in the lovely garden; pines and oaks to shade and border it. Abigail always loved a garden.

"In this path," she wrote,—for she was ever a poetry lover, also—

> "How long soe'er the wanderer roves, each step
> Shall wake fresh beauties; each last point present
> A different picture, new, and yet the same."

She was happy to be near her daughter again. Thomas was at Harvard. John Quincy was at Newburyport, studying law in the office of Theophilus Parsons. She wrote to them, and to her relatives and friends. But in writing to anyone of affairs of state she must now be cautious. Her position was a delicate one; yet how near to her heart were these affairs! The new appointments were more

* The site of the house has now been swallowed up in the development of the Greenwich Village section of New York City.

than encouraging to a lover of his country. Jay, the former Secretary of State, had been made Chief Justice; Jefferson had succeeded him in the Secretaryship. Such choices promised well for young America.

It was with regret that she left her garden on Richmond Hill at the end of a year, moving with the seat of government to Philadelphia, and taking with her, for a visit, the eldest of Abby's nice little boys, who now numbered three. Little John was enchanted with Bush Hill, the Vice-President's new house. Grandmama might bemoan the Hudson, the ample storerooms and kitchens of Richmond Hill, and compare disparagingly this inadequate, unwarmed, green-painted home, where Tom, out of college, and always rheumatically inclined, took cold as soon as he looked at it; but baby Johnny could play with sheep and a dog on the lawn in front of the house—a joy he had never known before.

Poor housewife! Frozen out the first night in Philadelphia, she must put up at the City Tavern; and next day she must wrestle with boxes and barrels, chairs and tables, and see that the painters got through and that Briesler went off to the ship that had not yet finished unloading their furniture. She must get fires built; beds made; and try not to notice the damp and the paint.

Try not to notice them!

"On Sunday, Thomas was laid up with the rheumatism; on Monday, I was obliged to give Louisa an emetic; on Tuesday, Mrs. Briesler was taken with her old pain in her stomach; and to complete the whole, on Thursday, Polly was seized with a violent pleuritic fever. She has been twice bled, a blister upon her side, and has not been out of bed since, only as she is taken up to have her bed made."

And company coming, whether or no, from eleven till three each day! The house overrun with ladies and gentlemen. The lovely young Mrs. Bingham and the beautiful Nancy Hamilton dropping in to pay their respects and to enquire for Abby; Mrs. Lear, a neighbor, calling to assure Abigail that Mrs. Washington was far

worse off than she, for her house would not be finished that year. And prices double; and comfort half, of those of New York!

Abigail simply did not have time to give way to the sickness she herself felt. Well, there were worse off than she—though her best trunk of clothes had got filled with sea-water and ruined. There was poor Mrs. Knox, for instance, the wife of the Secretary of War, whose ship, with all her furniture, had not been heard of since it sailed into a storm!

Heigho! She must forget a raging toothache, her pains and ills, and answer the many cards and invitations that rained in on her. She must forget that she could no longer send the man and the horses and coach for Abby and the two other small ones, and spend a happy day with them. Tom was still sick abed; he must be nursed to health again; the servants were recovering, thanks to their mistress' ministrations; but as yet she had not ventured much abroad, though she greatly desired to cultivate the friendship of several of the ladies and gentlemen who were so courteous to her.

To the Drawing-room she must go, as the Vice-President's lady—her first Philadelphia appearance in public. It was a brilliant affair—a bevy of beauty, led by the dazzling Mrs. Bingham, who set the fashions here, as she had in a smaller way in Europe. This beauty of the almond eyes and the whimsical smile, the former Anne Willing, ruled society from her Philadelphia mansion; and society loved her for her grace and wit. Here was Peggy Chew, who had known and revered the English André—he had been her knight at the famous Michianza. Here were her lovely sisters, and the dazzling Allens, and the gracious crowd of older ladies, headed by Mistress Powell, an aunt of Anne Bingham. Here was Betsey Schuyler, daughter of the hero of the Northern battles—she who had married young Alexander Hamilton. She was kind, admiring, helpful. In such a *galère,* Abigail at least felt more at home than in the midst of lords and dukes and ladies who had veiled the cold shoulder with no more than a transparent wisp of tact.

CHAPTER XLVIII

HERITAGE

IT was a gay winter, though the heavy snow "put her eyes out." Abigail was accepting only half the invitations that poured in on her. She must run her household; guide the little tyrant, Johnny Smith, who ruled his Grandpapa with a diminutive finger of iron. Officialdom might well have gaped, had their late afternoons brought them to Bush Hill just before a small boy's bedtime. They might have glimpsed solid, stolid John Adams in harness indeed, pulling a chair and a boy round and round the suffering drawing-room carpet, and being slashed unmercifully with a willow-switch if he was not going fast enough. And delighting in it, too.

The child was a general favorite, handsome and bright beyond his years, and none the worse for the attention Abigail gave to him —closer attention, for all her social duties, she admitted, than she had ever found the time to give to her own. She hated to leave him for routs and parties, tea and cards, and was almost glad when a party fell on a Saturday evening, when she could, true to her own upbringing, refuse it on religious grounds.

Yet the life was agreeable enough; the company pleasant, even though accommodations were despicable and etiquette, on occasion, almost as bad. At the play, the Vice-President and his lady were presented with a box, and attended as often as the President and lady did. The theater was a good one—as good as any she had seen out of France. She had seen "The School for Scandal" played in London, with Farren most divinely in the lead; she saw it again here, spoiled for her a little by the absence of such art, but enjoyable, she writes, for all that.

It was the play one evening; a supper the next; a dance the next. If only the weather were not so cold! Abigail felt it now, more

than ever she had done before on her travels. She could appreciate the equable English climate from here; and understand, too, she said, why people there did not seem to grow old half so quickly!

But life was smooth enough; the affairs of Congress calm, with only occasional ripples.

She gave a dinner to the President and Mrs. Washington, to the Governor, the Ministers, and some of the Senators. Mrs. Washington was a pleasant friend, and the President no less so. And the Adamses were easier entertaining than being entertained.

They dined with the Washingtons, and a similar company. The President likewise, it seemed, was happy in the rôle of host. He unbent more than Abigail had seen him yet, thin-faced, and regal in his bearing, a little chill of aspect, but courtly to the ladies. He chatted to Abigail, on his right hand; told her the news of the day, of Europe and of some of her friends there.

He asked for Mrs. Smith and the little boys, and Abigail felt the pang of separation afresh. She had just now sent a letter, and a gift of silk for a dress, to her daughter by the hand of the Chief Justice, Mr. Jay, who was journeying to New York.

But her heart must certainly have warmed anew to George Washington when, leaning forward in his chair, he picked some sugar-plums from a big cake that had been set before him, and begged her to take them to Master John.

There was grave talk, however, predominating at this table. The Indians were giving trouble, and troops were being raised to quiet them. Some of the ladies told her it was said that Colonel Smith, were he not away again on duty in England, would be put in command of this new expedition. With visions of tomahawks and scalping-knives, Abigail could be glad that he *was* far away, though in every letter her daughter grieved and fretted more at the parting.

With usage, Philadelphia was becoming more tolerable, though the weather this winter had been such that she was either snowbound or kept a prisoner because the road from her house was a

morass of clay and mud. The view from the house was a fine one. The city lay below, and—if only the weather had permitted her to walk—the grove of pines behind the house was inviting, the gravel walk beyond, with its decorative marble statues, tantalizing to one who could not venture forth to study them. As before, a river—the Schuylkill now—ran below their grounds, and wheat and grass were plentiful. She could not complain of her surroundings, however she might long for home. . . .

And meanwhile a young man in Boston chafed against the bit—a newly-admitted young lawyer of the name of John Quincy Adams. He had been admitted to practice when he was just turned twenty-three, and had set up his office most hopefully. But the growth of a small law practice was proving too slow for a youth made restless by world travel and world affairs.

Like his father, John Quincy began to let out some of his enthusiasm and some of his restless statesmanship through the end of his pen. There was sufficient occasion.

Thomas Paine, with whom the elder Adams had joined issue on other occasions, was being allowed to air, in the press of the United States, his thoughts on the "Rights of Man," and his machinations in the Revolutionary crisis which now came to overtake France. His sentiments were alien to all that young Adams stood for, and, unable to resist a flaying of them, he took to himself, in the manner of his sire, a nom-de-plume—"Publicola"—and answered Paine. The articles that he wrote were read and respected by Europeans as well as by Americans, most of whose guesses at the identity of the author only got close enough to name his father as such. The logic of the guess was obvious. And now that it became clear that France's aspirations toward a republic took a wholly different direction from those that had moved the American Colonies, "Publicola" was freely quoted, and made more or less of an authority.

His parents took pride in the distinction, but John had other views when it came to pointing at the style of his son's writing as

his own. He went at this time on a visit to his native Braintree—or Quincy, rather, for the part they lived in had long since been renamed, in honor of Abigail's grandfather, Colonel John. From there John Adams wrote to his wife:

"You apologize for the length of your letters, and I ought to excuse the shortness and emptiness of mine. Yours give me more entertainment than all the speeches I hear. There are more good thoughts, fine strokes, and mother wit in them than I hear in the whole week. An ounce of mother wit is worth a pound of clergy; and I rejoice that one of my children, at least, has an abundance of not only mother wit, but his mother's wit. It is one of the most amiable and striking traits in his composition. . . . If the rogue has any family pride, it is all derived from the same source. His Pa renounces and abjures every trace of it. He has curiosity to know his descent and comfort in the knowledge that his ancestors, on both sides, for several generations, have been innocent. But no pride in this. Pomp, splendor, office, title, power, riches are the sources of pride, but even these are not excuse for pride. The virtues and talents of ancestors should be considered as examples and solemn trusts and produce meekness, modesty, and humility, lest they should not be imitated and equalled. Mortification and humiliation can be the only legitimate feelings of a mind conscious that it falls short of its ancestors in merit. I must stop."

The years were bringing more work for the younger Adams' pen, and for the young mind that chafed because others were serving their country while he remained in obscurity in his slowly-growing law practice in Boston. While the fever in France ripened and broke at length into seething malignancy; while Danton, Robespierre and Marat rose; while crowned heads fell beneath the guillotine's stained knife; while a new France, too ambitious, rose from blood and ashes; while Colonel Smith came home from Europe to tell his father-in-law that the "Thoughts on Government" and "Defence of the Constitution" of John Adams were being studied by struggling French statesmen; while a hot-headed French Minister named Genet came to sow tactlessness and distrust in Philadelphia, where his country's friends, the Democrats, led by Thomas Jefferson, had banqueted to mark the opening of a fight

for freedom in France; John Quincy's pen was busy. Still under noms-de-plume, he filled columns of the Boston *Centinel*—signing his work "Marcellus," "Columbus," "Barnevelt." Fire burned behind these articles—a vivacious flame of wrathful patriotism with a guard of consummate diplomacy manufactured through slow youthful years in Europe. No Genet should prevent the new United States from choosing a stand and maintaining it in the face of a European revolution whose aims had proved themselves not liberty but lust for domination. There was a brain behind the articles, keen and fearless—a brain that could not be permitted to remain in a Boston law office while America needed able representation abroad.

And so, before John Quincy reached his twenty-seventh birthday, his name came in from President Washington to the Senate Chamber, over which John Adams presided, and in which John Adams swung a casting vote on any question that should strike a deadlock. The President had nominated Mr. John Quincy Adams as Minister Resident at The Hague.

There was no casting vote.

The President's nomination was unanimously confirmed.

On his twenty-seventh birthday, Abigail's eldest son received his commission, and, not without a certain inherited hesitancy as to his own fitness for such a signal honor, accepted none the less with joy, and rode into the arena with a leaky frigate as a chariot, but with an enthusiasm tight and inexhaustible in his heart.

CHAPTER XLIX

FORECAST

ABIGAIL had gone back to Quincy, with Philadelphia a memory of sumptuous gatherings, exquisite dress and unsurpassed beauty; cruel weather, with two days chill and the next a broiling

oven; snow and frost and, when there was neither of these, mud more often than inviting dryness of roads; sickness and a constant effort to make ends meet. She had been driven home by her own sickness first, and now was held there by a serious illness of old Mrs. Adams. Nothing less important would have held her, for John needed her support now as perhaps he had never needed it before.

To present clearly all that parting meant to both of them, and the difference which reunion made, it is as necessary to portray the extent of Mr. Adams' loneliness of spirit as it is to describe the poor state of Abigail's health and the varying circumstances that kept her from him at these periods.

With the advent of stable government had come, inevitably, party splits. In an already long and bitter experience of hostile criticism, sometimes just, mostly unjust, John Adams had never been forced to contend with an avalanche of antagonism such as he now must meet. His crime was, as ever, that he was whole-hearted. Federalist by conviction—that is, a defender of all the articles and amendments of the adopted Constitution—there was never any question of his vacillating on a point of policy. That was not John Adams. He wished the government to be powerful—something it had never been throughout its early career, and none knew better than he what misery that fact had wrought.

But when he voted to give the President power to remove members of his own Cabinet without the consent of the Senate,—they said he did it because he hoped to be President himself some day! They accused him of pro-British tendencies, of aristocratic sentiments; there was little they did not accuse him of. But he was not the kind to be swayed by accusations. He believed in power by virtue of achievement. He laughed inherited position to scorn, but yet believed in a governing class—a class trained by intelligence, education and experience to govern. He hated show, but knew from past experience that certain forms of state display impressed a certain authority, and valued it for that, as he was always to value the office more than the man who filled it. It was a nice

distinction—too nice for his party's detractors. He seemed to draw their fire. They were afraid of Hamilton; and Washington was still a god. So Adams felt the full force of abuse—at first, at any rate. And unfortunately, since he had not the art of temporizing or of suave dealing, and since the healing salve of Abigail's presence was for the moment denied him, his sensitiveness slowly turned into a barricade of vanity; his keen dogmatic mind into a rebellious fieriness.

Then his party, well established now, and ridden with iron hand by Alexander Hamilton, whose many measures the Vice-President's honest voting had carried through, sent John Adams back by a majority against Clinton for a second term as Vice-President while the world still rocked with the fury of the French Revolution. It proved a period of comparative, and somewhat irksome, peace for him. For vituperation found for itself a new outlet—unbelievable before, but none less inevitable.

Every god, as it has worshipers, has also its agnostics. At the birth of the government, every man had stood solid for Washington, who had brought his country's arms through bloody war. But by the end of the first term, the Revolution in France had caused a party split in America. Jefferson became the leader of a group that favored France's avowed governmental aims and the new democracy. Hamilton, under President Washington, headed the Federalists, who leaned toward the inherited form of the British Constitution, but would preserve a strict neutrality in European strife.

Public opinion, however, was decidedly pro-French and anti-British, and much might have been accomplished by France had she presented a man possessed of the magic of tact and discretion to talk to the friends of France in the Congress.

She sent Genet. . . .

But it was *Pater Patriae* who was now to be plastered with the name of crocodile, hyena, deceiver and double dealer. Jefferson might call upon his adversary Adams, and, both honest men, each might deplore the way that things were going, the blunderings of

Genet, the spoke that this mountainous molehill had put in the wheel of sane progress. But the papers were roasting a reputation—the anti-Federalist papers of Jefferson's party. What were "Lady" Washingtons' drawing-rooms, the President's levees, his Birthdays, his picking and choosing of ceremonies and affairs that he would attend, but signs that he aspired towards kingship? What was his refusal to aid France, that had formerly aided America, but the sign of an inordinate love for that former enemy, Britain?

Washington's hand on the wheel of State never shook or faltered; but the heart of Washington, that beat for America and had so long been warmed by America's thanks, quailed.

John could well admire his chief's firm integrity; and pity his sensitiveness, though long experience as what he himself sardonically termed "Libellee General" had put John Adams personally beyond fear of criticism forever. He knew, if anybody did, that America owed the French government, at least, nothing—that help from the French government had been ambitious help, withdrawn ere it could bestow strength, withdrawn when it had accomplished its aim—a blow at George III.

Adams' companion now was another young member of the Bar, whose learnedness was a source of gratification, but whose leanings towards the society of the charming daughters of John's friends did not please so well! His name—officially—was Thomas B. Adams. At home, not so very many years since, he had been, familiarly, "Baby Tommy."

Abby and Colonel Smith and their family were here as well, the Colonel a Presidential official and wealthy by virtue of certain fortunate deals as a citizen in the interim.

John Adams deplored the fact, and not too privately, either, that his son-in-law William did not take to wealth with humility. His wife must drive in her coach and four; her house must be lavishly adorned; she must have jewels and clothes and give parties to compete with the gayest.

Well, for her father—there was no wealth for him, and there

would be no coach here either, except the public stage, until his allowance grew a little more generous.

"Shiver my jib and start my planks," cried John Adams, "and I will travel by the stage; I will live, at the seat of the government, in lodgings."

Young Smith was a clever fellow, and a likeable one, a gallant soldier and a great worker when he was not boasting. But——

"Tell not of your prosperity, because it will make two men mad to one glad," wrote John to Abigail, "nor of your adversity, for it will make two men glad to one mad."

Back to the farm for a brief respite—the farm that Abigail was running once more with skill and husbandry, her patient, like herself, recovered, for the time. Back to well-manured barley-rows and well-nursed orchards; to stock as fine and healthy as their circumstances could keep it; to dairy and home as sweet as was their ripe affection for each other. Mrs. Washington had sent her love; all the ladies had, and most of the men, also! Mr. So-and-So had said that Mrs. Adams was needed in Philadelphia—that she ought to be made Autocratrix of the United States. And John himself could tell her that not the choicest of the ladies, the most brilliant of the wives, had his Nabby's saucy, knowledgeful way, or eyes that lit like hers, with understanding, when matters of state were discussed.

Abigail laughed at such flattery, at home on the farm with John.

But too soon he had to return—to strife and stress of politics, to racking news from France—the Queen beheaded; their friends, the la Fayettes, broken.

Poor Marie Antoinette!

The tragic news made Abigail long for reunion with her own scattered family more poignantly than ever. With John's, her yearnings now flew world-wide, almost—to New York, where

Charles had married and settled down; to Holland, where young Mr. John Quincy Adams, the lawyer, of Boston, had found his present allotted niche; to Spain, where Smith had now taken Abby on a similar mission. And above all, to the mate of many years, many circumstances.

John's heart, like Abigail's, was in pieces. There was not even abuse any longer, to gather it together. The President drew the bulk of that. Hamilton had resigned his Secretaryship, but remained the leader and the guiding hand of the party; Knox was gone into retirement also; and Jefferson went now, but was still, like Hamilton, a guiding hand. It was not to be expected in human nature that their places could be filled by men as worthy.

The friendship between Adams and Jefferson had survived this far. Likewise, John still tolerated Hamilton, who had grown strong in hatred of him because he would not, like the rest of his party, be led. That hatred was soon to engender a return dislike, and each to fan the other to a fury. . . .

Pickering was Secretary of State. Wolcott had taken Hamilton's place in the Treasury. McHenry was Secretary of War. But all three, as Mr. Adams was too tardy in suspecting, were Hamilton, or his shadows. . . .

And with Jay in Europe, endeavoring to make in a new attempt a treaty of commerce with England; with John Quincy Adams called from Holland to England to aid him in ratifying his treaty; with William Smith closing a treaty with Spain, and a new minister coming from France to replace the unwise Genet; here in Philadelphia, years and undeserved abuse crept over a noble soldier, a great man whose life had served his country; and he grew dispirited, and tired.

John wrote to Abigail, in February of 1796:

" . . . . The subject which you think will excite all their feelings is well known to everybody in public life, but is talked of by nobody but in confidence. I could name you, however, as good federalists, and as good men as any, who think and say that he will retire, and that they would if they were

he. And who would not? I declare upon my honor I would. After twenty years of such service with such success, and with no obligation to anyone, I would retire, before my constitution failed, before my memory failed, before I should grow peevish and fretful, irresolute or improvident. I would no longer put at hazard a character so dearly earned, at present so uncontaminated, but liable by the weakness of age to be impaired in a moment. He has, in the most solemn manner, sworn before many witnesses at various times and several occasions, and it is now, by all who are in the secret, considered as irrevocable as the laws of Medes and Persians. . . . In my opinion there is no more danger in the change than there would be in changing a member of the senate, and whoever lives to see it, will own me to be a prophet. If Jay or even Jefferson (and one or the other it certainly will be) if the succession should be passed over, should be the man, the government will go on as well as ever. Jefferson could not stir a step in any other system than that which is begun. Jay would not wish it. The votes will run for three persons. Two, I have mentioned; the third, being the heir apparent, will probably not be wholly overlooked. If Jefferson and Jay are President and Vice-President, as is not improbable, the other retires without noise, or cries, or tears to his farm. If either of these two is President and the other Vice-President, he retires without murmur or complaint to his farm forever. If this other should be President and Jefferson or Jay Vice-President, four years more, if life last, of residence in Philadelphia will be his and your portion, after which we shall probably be desirous of imitating the example of the present pair; or if, by reason of strength and fortitude, eight years should be accomplished, that is the utmost limit of time that I will ever continue in public life at any rate.

"Be of good courage therefore, and tremble not. I see nothing to appal me, and I feel no ill forebodings or faint misgivings. I have not the smallest dread of private life nor of public. If private life is to be my portion, my farm and my pen shall employ the rest of my days.

"The money of the country, the paper money is the most unpleasant object I see. This must have a remedy, and I fear it will be reserved for me to stem the torrent, a worse one than the western rebellion, or the opposition to the treaty. . . ."

There are worse yet, John Adams! There is jealousy; there is the crime of honesty; there is a third torrent to stem—vanity!

CHAPTER L

INAUGURATION

" 'The sun is dressed in brightest beams,
To give thy honors to the day.'

"AND may it prove an auspicious prelude to each ensuing season. You have this day to declare yourself head of a nation. 'And now, O Lord, my God, thou hast made thy servant ruler over the people. Give unto him an understanding heart, that he may know how to go out and come in before this great people, that he may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this thy so great a people?' were the words of a royal sovereign, and not less applicable to him who is invested with the chief magistracy of a nation, though he wear not a crown, nor the robes of royalty.

"My thoughts and my meditations are with you, though personally absent; and my petitions to Heaven are, that 'the things which make for peace may not be hidden from your eyes.' My feelings are not those of pride or ostentation, upon the occasion. They are solemnized by a sense of the obligations, the important trusts, and numerous duties connected with it. That you may be enabled to discharge them with honor to yourself, with justice and impartiality to your country, and with satisfaction to this great people, shall be the daily prayer of your

"A. A."

The day she spoke of had passed. John Adams, as Vice-President of the United States, had performed his final duty in the Senate Chamber—that of declaring himself, by the choice of the people of the country, its new Chief Magistrate. He had spoken his farewell address to the upper house, and if there was hurt in it, as well as dignity, he told them that the injury was not of their causation. Toward them he had only gratitude, respect, affection. They had trusted him, helped him, and had faith in his deciding judgments. In some corner of his heart, remote from satisfaction at the sense of due reward, he could almost envy Thomas Jefferson this seat, save

for its confining radius—save, more potently, for his hard-earned triumph over those who would have held him there against his deserts.

On the eve of that great ceremony that would make him in official fact the sworn head of the nation, he lay abed, wakeful, he writes to Abigail. Doubtless he pondered on achievement—and on friendship.

His "dearest friend" had weathered the storms of political life with him. But of all his other friendships, few had survived. The friends of his youth—Sewall, Sam Quincy, Major Brattle—where were they? Mistrusted and mistrusting, because of an upheaval that had thrown them on opposite shores. McKean, Sam Adams had wavered in a slanderous wind of carefully-sown gossip that held John Adams ambitious for royal rank, for British favor—for everything save favor to France, which was where his enemies' favor lay.

Yet it was not his pro-France enemies who had plotted his downfall, or at least his lodgment in the more or less stagnant bog of the Vice-Presidency for a third term. Not Thomas Jefferson, though he had arisen immediately as a serious political menace in the race for the Presidency; not the Democrats.

Hamilton's machinations in this campaign, with Pinckney of the South as a Presidential pawn, are history. Even Mr. Jefferson, John's Presidential opponent, protested vehemently against the slanders against John Adams that were sown in the South to further these machinations. They miscarried only by a majority of three votes. The North would not utterly cast John Adams out.

But when Adams, with irrefutable proof before him in the form of written letters, at length realized the extent of Hamilton's campaign against his election, it was war, to the knife, forever, between them.

Of all this he must have thought as he lay there, unable to sleep. And of his beloved wife, tied to her farm by her own illness, and later by that of her niece, a young and delicate woman whom she

had taken to live with her; besides the failing health of John's aged mother. Clouds hovered in the direction of home, threatening his composure. And he needed Abigail's wise tongue and her persistent cheerfulness, so much more than ever in this moment!

But when she came to him—where were they to live—and how? Mr. Washington had come into the Presidency a wealthy man. He had lived in it almost entirely at his own expense; and he would retire no longer a man of more than sufficient means. His house in the High Street was a modest one—so modest, indeed, that Congress had voted to build him another, and had carried out the plan. But as Congress had omitted to vote that it would meet the whole of the extra heavy burden of expense which the new grand mansion would carry, even to its full rent, Mr. Washington had declined it, and elected to stay on in his less pretentious President's House.

As for the Adamses—the thought of living up to the Presidency at all, on the salary of the President and little else, appalled them. House rents were prohibitive, carriages and horses, glass and china and furniture, even the least pretentious that would be compatible with the new estate, a matter for tremendous outlay; and, though the Senate, respecting John's circumstance, had voted a small sum towards these, he would be hard pressed unless some allowance should come from the House. Yet he must hire servants and secretaries, give to charity in accordance with his relation to the various people and institutions, and comport himself as a Chief Executive somehow. He had bidden Abigail sell the houses and such of their belongings as she saw fit, before she came to him. And meanwhile he must live at a hotel, and wait to see what Congress was prepared to do.

On the fourth of March, 1797, John Adams arose faint from sleeplessness, from anxiety, from as near a fear of the unknown as his aggressive soul could experience. He was not well. Always high-strung and nervous, his imagination shook him now, giving him doubt, we learn from his letters to his wife, as to whether he

could endure the day's ceremony, of which he must be the center. He was more and more convinced that he stood alone—friendless—generally disliked and misunderstood, calumniated. . . .

He dressed, with the aid of his man, in the new suit that seemed to fit the occasion. His hair meticulously powdered and tied in a silken bag; his shoes, buckles, belt adjusted, he walked out, trying to believe that he could go through the day. Such ceremonies were not to his liking. This, of which he was the subject, would be doubly trying.

He had found a chariot whose price was within his means and also within his notions of the importance of his new station; horses fine enough to draw it to the inauguration. In a shaken mood he entered it—and entered, thereon, into four strife-ridden years as President of the United States.

There was a fine assembly in the House—as elegant and as noble-appearing as any European state gathering. The ladies had come in their finest, with laces and jewels profuse, with fans and slippers and hats of the newest *genre*. The Judges were assembled in their robes of office, the Chief Justice, Ellsworth, ready to administer the oath. The throng was tremendous, John tells Abigail. The hands to shake, the smiles to acknowledge, seemed to fill the thickened air.

He took his stand, facing the multitude, Ellsworth beside him, the officers of the Government assembled round; when a word flashed through the Hall of Congress, and every eye turned, on the instant, doorward.

"Washington!"

George Washington had cried, in the bitterness of disillusionment, that no man ever had been made to suffer such calumnies, such lies, such criticism and such slanders as he. Paine, in France, had denounced him; Genet insulted him and won the rabble over against him; the opposition had called him unsound in his judgments because he stood firm for neutrality. Yet now that he was going, they recognized him anew. He had become the symbol, the

center-piece, once more. His story shone out with renewed and glorious halo; his services and his integrity and his unswerving patriotism came back to the minds and hearts of his countrymen, and drove out all the remainder of planted suspicion and fostered disgust.

And John Adams' inaugural, John Adams' address, in which he pledged his likewise upright soul to that same service which had brought Washington through doubt into fame again; John Adams, the new President, himself, became but a background as ex-President George Washington walked down the Congress room to give his support to his successor. The welcome to the new administration became, on that instant, a scene of tender farewell to the pilot of the old!

Everyone gazed at Washington, who was departing. And everyone gazed through tears. Mr. Adams, his great oath taken, his lengthy speech made, his eager tribute paid to this noble soldier and statesman, who was winding up a career of service by a generous gesture toward himself, was filled, he confesses to the missing Abigail, with a kind of sardonic wonder. On all sides, weeping—scarcely an auspicious accompaniment to any administration's birth! Were they weeping for the loss of this well-loved chief alone—or for the acquisition, also, of one who had no place at all in their affections?

It was Washington's day. At the Francis Hotel, where President Adams would lodge for the while, the people thronged the doorway later, with loud huzzas and waving of hats. But the reason—? Not the accession! George Washington had driven around in his globe-shaped coach with the high-stepping horses—Washington, in his black velvet suit and his high-polished shoes, and his high-faced hat with the black cockade, surmounting his powdered hair. He had just stepped from his coach at the hotel door, and entered to bring his congratulations and his sincerest wishes to the new President!

And in his blue eyes, that were pleasant but so rarely lost their

sadness, John noted again a look that had been there when the great man had stood beside him in the House of Representatives that day.

"Ay!" it had seemed to say to him. "I am fairly out, and you fairly in! See which of us will be happiest."

Perhaps Abigail, at home, visioned them, grasping hands in parting and congratulation. An interesting contrast, these two,—George Washington in accustomed velvets, elegant, tall, invariably commanding of respect, a hero figure; and John Adams, short, square-set, of bold appearance and a sensitive heart—as sensitive as Washington's own, but veiled in brusqueness instead of with the cool mist of dignity—John, in unaccustomed finery that made him more than ever a man of the people.

"Mr. Adams, sir, I bring you my sincere congratulations and those of Mrs. Washington. We both wish with all our hearts that your administration may be happy, successful, and honorable."

"I thank you, sir. If I can make it so—if I can follow in the path you have made—it shall be so. I want no greater achievement than to retire at the end of my time as honored and as well-beloved as my predecessor."

And out in the street below——

"Huzza! Huzza—for Washington!"

CHAPTER LI

FIRST LADY

JOHN'S mother was dead. Abigail had nursed her, had loved her as well as any daughter could, and missed her as her own. The honest old lady, so proud of her son, had lived to the day of his greatest triumph, and if she had had any regret, it was that he had been so little with her, and that he might not be there at the end.

It had been a harrowing time for Abigail, since she had parted, sick and reluctant, from her husband. Her niece had passed away; his mother now—the last of four tender parents.

And she herself? She was not only fever-racked, sorrow-racked. She was racked with anxiety for the man that many spoke lies of—the man who had never knowingly, as she would have sworn on the Book, performed an ill act in his life. His inaugural address she could read and understand as nobody else—not even himself, perhaps. So much of trepidation; so aching a sense of need for justification! Why was this man born with so much of sensibility, she wondered, that he must think it needful to appeal to posterity for vindication of the acts for which his enemies reviled him? Posterity would judge him when his enemies were forgotten, and their statements with them. For he was great, and they were very small. . . .

As the President's lady she attended the Boston celebration of Washington's birthday. The President himself was attending the Philadelphia ceremonies, though Washington had gone to Mount Vernon, and such occasions had ever savored a little too much of Royal courts to suit the plainer people, whose favor John would keep. No Birthdays for him, save in the bosom of his family; he wanted no Presidential feast-days!

In the bosom of his family! His family was scattered, depleted in numbers, alas.

But Abigail, at last, was coming! It could not be too soon.

Abigail Adams was fifty-two, in delicate health, attached by virtue of the years to her home-town and her farm, when Destiny took her from a grateful privacy to the dazzling glare that haloed the First Lady of the Land. What must have been her feelings as she reached Paulus Hook on her journey to Philadelphia, and there stepped from her own less pretentious coach and entered for the first time the state equipage of President John Adams? A daughter of gently-blooded folks, the gay *milieu* had long since become an alien one to her; but, whereas she had given herself, for better, for

worse, thirty-three years since, to a youthful, hopeful farmer-lawyer, she gave herself no more hesitatingly now, no less staunchly, though depleted in health by the typhus which had for long intermittently stricken them both, to the public figure that he had become.

She knew exactly what faced her. The mob rule in France, destroying ceremony—even mocking it—might have captured the sympathies of Jefferson and his party, but John, like Washington before him, was an implicit believer in the impressive and dignified value of that which observation in Europe had led him to call the necessary ceremonies. So, repugnant as occasions were to him, she knew that he would not fail to carry each one through; and she must do her part.

What did it matter? What did anything matter, save that they were to be together once more, sharing sorrow and relief alike? She might be weakened by the ravages of sadness and ill-health; but he needed her—her society, her support, her love,—as he had never done before.

So she stepped into her new coach at Paulus Hook with a stout heart, and drove, at length, up to a slope-roofed, three-storied house on the High Street in Philadelphia. There, at the head of a flight of marble steps that fronted a pleasant door, flung open expectantly, stood the stocky, well-dressed figure that Philadelphia knew and bowed to.

And he was smiling, who had not smiled for weeks.

He came down to her, gave her his hand and, the step swiftly lowered by a waiting boy, brought her forth from the coach's depths. That composed, stately form, so dear to him; those dark, keen eyes beneath the wide-brimmed hat, shining with love for him; that firm yet tender mouth, smiling, if sadly; that fine, firm, courageous chin!

She had come. For another of those hours of bliss that, like the infrequent periods of a lengthy discourse, punctuated the troubled recitative of his public life, he might forget the bitterness of triumph, the sour taste of glory.

Picture him leading her, then, into the house, and down the long, bright hall to the half-empty dining-room, cleared for his receptions, and awaiting, as did the remainder of the President's house, the President's lady's selection of furniture. Congress had at length bestowed on him, failing his acceptance of the onerous taxes on his private income that the newer official edifice would have imposed, Washington's less pretentious house, nestling in its attractive grounds here just off the High Street. He had come here not long since, from the Hotel Francis, to live in rather modest bachelor state until Abigail's arrival.

And she was here at last! There they might stand, alone in the curve of the handsome bay windows that looked onto the garden in the rear of the house.

His dearest Abigail, who had been through so much of sadness, as he of fear for her!

She had needed no coaxing to come, she said.

"I could have whipped up the horses myself, so anxious was I when I was on my way."

She had not seen him since he had come into the highest office. She was longing to know how the cares of leadership affected him. But she would hardly be prepared for this new tightness of the lip, this foreign perplexity of eye. Maybe she thought, fleetingly, of a little girl in Braintree years ago—a small child with a face like a miniature of John's—confronting a smaller brother who had accused her of not *caring* that her father had gone away.

A hurt look—a misunderstood look.

But he was smiling now.

Busy days for Mrs. Adams—seeing that her linens and her belongings remaining from the sale were rightly unshipped; buying more—buying furniture and new fine clothes and table equipment and ornaments, to grace the President's house. The drawing-room and reception room on the second floor, the sleeping chambers opposite, the servants' quarters at the top of the house; they must all

be finished, ready for her first evening reception, which would supplement the Tuesday levees that Mr. Adams had held over from his predecessor's administration.

The President, his hair curled and powdered and put into its silken bag, descended the stairs of the President's house in his velvet suit, bright buttons on his coat, bright buckles at knee and instep, delicate ruffles at wrist, his neckerchief a stock "with a pudding in it," as the expression went, a small-sword, cased in kidskin, at his side. Back in the embrasure of the window in the cleared dining-room he took his stand, his ministers and secretaries about him. A plain cocked hat was in his white-gloved hand, and, like Washington, he refrained from handclasps with those who came to be presented to him.

One after another the gentlemen stepped forward. One after another their names were announced. John bowed to each in turn, repeating the name, and making a nice point of coupling appearances with names so that he would remember everyone next time, as the courtly Washington had done.

The visitors formed a circle, and round this the President progressed after the doors were closed to further entrances. To each he must find some word to say; and later must return to his place at the head of the room and bow again as each one took his leave.

But Mrs. Adams' evenings were far less formal, and more to his liking. He need not wear his velvets, or his sword, or carry his hat. Plain broadcloth then, of any color, and plain black stockings.

Abigail was immediately popular, a very gracious First Lady. She had the faculty of a natural cordiality which held the magic to put everyone else at his or her ease.

They thronged to her gatherings—all the beauties of the Philadelphia set that she had known in her previous state; the lovely Willings and the beauteous Chews; the Ministers' ladies; the foreign diplomats' madams; distinguished women visitors; and their gallant escorts.

To Mrs. Adams' receptions the men brought their charming ladies in their silks and satins, their Italian gauze handkerchiefs, their poufs and their rose-wreaths, their floating chignons and their dangling curls. The men wore high-collared coats, with wide facings and large bright buttons, double-breasted vests, Nankeen breeches with silk stockings and glittering pumps with buckles, and a profusion of ruffles at breast and wrists.

Elegant affairs, to do honor to the President's middle-aged lady, in her nice satin gowns, and her excellent pearls, and her becoming lacy headdresses.

Once a week they gave a dinner, for a selected few, with John on one side of the table, Abigail on the other, and well-placed friends or members of the household at the table-ends, to keep the ball of hospitality evenly rolling.

For Abigail, life had become a round of social obligations—of political visits and return visits, of diplomatic calls and friendly receptions.

She went through it all with as stout a heart as possible, enjoying new friendships and increasing personal popularity and the more welcome privileges of her station; and trying to fight off infirmity as she strove to keep step with John in his march through the nettle-beds of suspicion and foreign strife, dangerous influences and trends abroad, and ambitious jealousy at home.

CHAPTER LII

NEUTRALITY

SOMEHOW he could endure the cares of office a little better when she was there. . . .

But before long Abigail had crumpled yet again, under the stress of social obligations, and retired to a long sickness of her old

complaint, far off in the sweet Quincy home—a new home now, a stately mansion of wood-paneled halls and gracious piazzas and such small dignity as they had earned for their old age. He had bought it from the wealthy merchant who had built it, and to it he journeyed—to his beloved invalid—whenever the exigencies of his thankless task would permit a freedom between sessions.

Thomas, their youngest, had been with John Quincy in Europe. If there were any bright spots, their children's lives, and the accomplishments, in particular, of John Quincy, were these. At the beginning of his administration John had thought it wise to call his eldest son home; but no less a person than Washington had protested, from his retirement, that such an act would be unfair both to the young man and to the country. On his suggestion, John had sent his son to the embassy in Berlin. In Holland, England, Germany, John Quincy Adams was winning laurels, if not popularity. It seemed that popularity was something that the Adams men, at least, were not apt in winning.

And in England he had won something dearer—a wife. He had married, at thirty, the London-born daughter of a Southern gentleman named Johnson, who was then the American Consul in the British capital. She was a niece, as well, of one of the signers of the Declaration; but still, in Johnny Quincy's mother's eyes, hardly a likely person, from her birth and upbringing, to share the good and the bad, the rough and the smooth, the farm work and the spotlight of publicity in the life of an Adams! And Abigail knew.

But beyond a frank letter or two airing her views, she could not oppose the marriage, even had she thought it fair to do so without having seen the lady of his choice.

And John Quincy, able diplomat, world traveler since his earliest childhood, a competent character by reason of his own birth and upbringing, was not one to be swayed in the dictates of his heart, even by his mother. So he married, and his Louisa graced the ambassadorial home and lent a pretty dignity, they heard, to ambassadorial functions.

Now Thomas came home, to be a joy to them. Charles was in New York, and, unhappily, ailing. Abby, her journeyings to and from Europe done with, her former ample circumstances sadly reduced by her improvident Colonel's poor judgment in money affairs, had retired to a farm of her own, and alas, to frail health also.

Thomas alone was home—or journeying, rather, from Philadelphia to Quincy, and from Quincy to Philadelphia, later to reap a judgeship from his achievements in the law.

But for John Adams in Philadelphia, nothing could lighten the increasing burden for long. It is not possible here to discuss again all the much-tried issued of his Presidency, or the bold acts for which he has been both blamed and praised—but chiefly blamed. They were patriotic acts—so much is certain. And it is certain, also, that they were single of purpose and utterly devoid of dishonor. But no study of Abigail Adams' life can fail to bring to the student the clearest possible picture of her husband, and no clear picture of John Adams can fail to show him a man of great vision, a great statesman, and a figure in our history to whom his full share of honor has never yet been paid.

In the days of his British Ambassadorship, the King had once ventured to sound him a little on his feeling toward France, and hinted that it was not altogether sympathetic. John had answered, simply, "I must avow to your Majesty that I have no attachment but to my own country."

It was the motto—even his detractors could never deny it—that he stamped on his administration's history. The internal agonies of France, the later bloody strife between that country and England, were being fought over again between Federalists and Republicans in an America so lately won for peace. But, save for that dearly-won peace, the second President, like the first, who had fought a war for it, had no attachment.

Such a man, single of purpose, independent, could not be a success, or popular, in a government already rife with intrigue and

party spirit. The one side boasted that he was sympathetic to the British side; the other snarled that he was. But both were wrong. His sympathies were with America, and no part of them lay abroad. He knew that England would still crush America at the birth of any commercial power if she could. He knew that France would do the same with equal satisfaction. Neither of them wished to see America a power. They had sufficient to do in contending with each other.

He was neither for France nor for England, though favorable to the latter's form of constitution, as against the new and highly oppressive, anti-democratic mob-rule of the former. But for war on the side of either he was in no degree available. European alliances would not serve the United States, either now or in the future.

He therefore preserved the unswerving neutrality that Washington had established; but it grew more and more difficult. Pickering was still Secretary of State, Wolcott of the Treasury; McHenry in charge of the War Department. And Hamilton was behind them, pulling the strings from his retirement.

And meanwhile France, wanting Jefferson at the head of America, and never partial to John Adams, bore down with added aggression on the United States of America, making new commercial demands, and refusing to receive any minister to take the place of Gouverneur Morris, who had been expelled by the revolutionaries, until these demands had been blindly complied with.

President Adams was ready to increase the artillery, the cavalry; to form an army if necessary; but he was by no means ready to carry war plans through until the last extreme had been reached. The provision of an adequate navy had always been a matter near to his heart; he urged it now, in the face of a new-old danger. Had he had his way, America would have become a power at sea long before she ultimately did. But somehow his enemies contrived to link his navy talk with his alleged desire for royalty; and his scheme was discredited and crippled.

With Hamilton's coöperation a composite mission to France was formed, its members, after much party squabbling, being Pinckney and John Marshall, both Federalists, and John Adams' old friend Elbridge Gerry, who, in spite of the friendship, had lined up with the "Jacobins," as the pro-French party was dubbed.

The outcome of their mission—the famous episode of the X, Y, Z letters—is familiar history, as is also the cloudburst of wrath that fell on Democrat and Federalist alike, on President and Ministers and Representatives and Senators, when the facts were made known. They had laid the country open to gross insult; they had put the country up for sale. Philadelphia became as Boston under siege—crowds fighting in the streets; Federalists pommelling the "antis"; patriots shouting the new national song, "Hail Columbia," and accompanying it with blows; committees sending votes of encouragement for the President's proposed war measures. Now John Adams could have obtained all the loyalty and support he wanted, if he would carry through a war with this nation that had so insolently outraged American honor.

But John Adams hated war; he loved peace; and in the current state of popular vacillation he realized unfailingly that if they committed themselves to war measures they might not be strong enough in the party, when it came to be time to carry the measures through.

And while he marked time, and prepared to get together the men for a provisional army, the tongue of ill-favor shot out at him. The papers spat forth venom; the man in the street called him incompetent, weak; and his few friends and his small popularity grew less. The man in the street, indeed, was heard to utter a wish that the salvo of gunshot that greeted the President upon state occasions would catch him in the "rear bulge of his breeches"; while others plotted a shade more subtly.

The passing of the Alien and Sedition Acts, the former designed to quell the calumnies against the Chief Magistrate and the governing body; the latter aimed at English and French exiles who sought to form factions in this country, did not help.

Nor did the matter of selecting an army. The choice of Commander-in-Chief of such an army was obvious. Washington was approached, and accepted with the proviso that he should not be called into active service until it became urgent.

But, for the rest—not war with France; not action, even, for the chosen generals; only hatred, more bitter than before, between the ambitious Hamilton, whom Washington unfailingly made the senior officer, and Adams, who opposed his seniority in favor of Knox.

No war, for Talleyrand, shamed by the publication of his bribery scheme, began protesting his inexhaustible kindliness towards the United States and any ministers the United States might send.

The protestations were not greeted with ardor.

John Adams, however, was not prepared to say that peace was impossible unless France took the initiative. He thought peace more valuable to the United States than to be sacrificed for the mere peccadillo of who should take the initiative, should the state of affairs warrant the taking of it by either. He would say that while his country did not fear war, it yet did not abandon the hope of peace; that its steady war preparations were for ensuring peace; and that with France lay the choice. The United States was not prepared, he would say, to submit to the further humiliation of sending another minister without every assurance for his reception. The United States was ready to respect the sacred rights of embassy. It was for France to make amends; to desist from hostility, to repair the injuries inflicted on American commerce. If she showed a disposition to just dealing, there would be no obstacle to a restoration of amicable relations.

The Hamiltonians were furious. What they desired was an exhibition—an object-lesson—to France that the United States' feelings had been hurt beyond any likely possibility of reconciliation. It would have been an expensive object-lesson for the United States to administer at that moment,—almost as expensive as the fearless, moderate step which balked it was to prove to John Adams.

Word came from Talleyrand that any representative that the United States cared to send to France would be received with the regard due to the agent of a free, independent and powerful nation. Then John Adams strode across his party's wounded pride. Pride was no basis for plunging a new republic into war—and war was upon them if Talleyrand's advances went unanswered while they squabbled.

He therefore took advantage of the President's prerogative, and by forcing an issue on the nomination of Vans Murray as minister to France, finally secured the despatch of the commission of three—Chief Justice Ellsworth, Governor Davie of North Carolina, and Vans Murray.

But with the seeming end of the tussle, John Adams' health broke. He must stay to see the instructions duly put through and framed, the plans and terms confirmed.

Then—home, for a brief forgetfulness, to Quincy and the healing arms of Abigail.

CHAPTER LIII

INTEGRITY

IT must have been like coming out of darkness into the light—to be in his fields in the early morning, lending a hand with the digging and sowing, touring the barns and stables, peeking in on Abigail in her dairy.

He could not throw the cares of office off—he might not even relax, beyond coming here, his Presidential labors—but at least he could lay his actions on the tender bosom of her sympathy and comprehension.

"Let the little men fight," she said. "Let those who call themselves Federalists fling away the blessings Heaven has offered them. Think only that posterity will judge of the actions without the

politics—and not alone posterity, but every right-thinking man and woman in this country."

But the rôle of passive resister was not for John. He was like an old sea-soldier who, if the gods were not favorable to his living a victor, at least would go down fighting.

His wife hid her foreboding.

Whatever happened, John Adams would have done all that lay in any man's power to secure peace for his country, and with it increased prosperity. At least none would be able to point to him as the cause if these things failed to reach fruition.

Even his enemies admitted so much. Even that fellow-campaigner and former friend, Jefferson, said of him that, though he was vain and irritable, he was "as disinterested as the Being who made him."

But Jefferson's very name was a knife-prick now to John's composure. Jefferson would rise if Adams and his party fell apart. Jefferson was suffering from his wrath because John Adams' own party hated him almost to the point of bringing about Jefferson's triumph. Yet who better than Jefferson, John Adams' former friend, could realize that a man might sacrifice his party and his own hopes for the sake of his country's welfare, and be the greater, however much he cried out under his own hurt, for doing so?

The days at Quincy were not to be peaceful. Congress was to sit at Trenton for a session. The city of Washington, the destined permanent home of the Government, would not be ready to house it until next year. Meanwhile, Talleyrand, outwardly suave and repentant, inwardly smarted still. He sent the requested official assurance of safe-conduct for the American emissaries—and accompanied it, too hardily, with a little smart criticism on the general attitude that America had taken.

Pickering grabbed the reply, and sent it as fast as horses could run to the President at Quincy.

Doubtless John read the dispatches to her whose support he had yearned for so long—"Our friend Talleyrand has been true to his nature,"—and communicated to her the gist of the papers.

She comprehended so perfectly. There were no "ifs" or "but should we's" or "have a care's" with her! If only there were some like her in Philadelphia!

A slight impertinence from Monsieur Talleyrand could not alter the fact that they had asked for due honor and recognition for their ambassadors—and received the assurance of it. The rest might be called superfluous.

He could take up his pen, cut it fine and carefully, dip it into the ink-horn and write with an added force. Mr. Pickering would prepare the instructions for Mr. Ellsworth and Mr. Davie.

It took Mr. Pickering five weeks to carry out the order. And in that five weeks matters came to a head in France, and Talleyrand resigned. Would it not be better, wrote Pickering, that, in view of these circumstances, there should be a little delay?

So Mr. Adams' rest was not a cure, and he rode to Trenton still sick; still weak with care and worries.

He found a hotbed of hostility awaiting him.

The French arms were suffering reverses. Wait a little, and the French king would be back on his throne! Hamilton and Ellsworth came in person to add their weight to the opposition against conciliating those who had hurled impertinences at the United States.

John Adams did not argue, or fly into a rage, this time. He proceeded to do that which he believed was for the good of the country. He called his cabinet and perfected the instructions. He roused the Secretaries to urgent action; he commissioned a frigate to take the two commissioners to join Murray in France.

They sailed—and with their sailing the Federalist party crumbled into ruin!

Maybe its hour had come, in any case. It had achieved its destiny. It had done as great things as would ever be done in forming and establishing a government. It had met the needs of the early days of the republic. It had started that republic well on its way. Maybe it would have gone now, in any event, into the discard.

But the Federalists, needless to say, blamed John Adams. He had betrayed, killed his own party. Hamilton, who ordered the policy of the party, and controlled its actions with a self-arrogated power only bounded by the impregnable independence of the President himself, was not mentioned. (Yet Hamilton had never been able to inspire sufficient Federalist confidence in the country at large, or to discount that which John Adams, alone of all the Federalists at the last election, had enjoyed.) Hamilton's policy as leader of the party was the only one to follow. That of John Adams, the President, was a revolt against Federalism. Never for one instant, however, did John Adams regret the course he had pursued. He had worked for his country, in a moment that he had conceived too great to allow of a weighing of his party's future against his country's. He had brought America through peril, and she was safe. He was not sorry.

But now that it was over he could find the time for hatred—could give spurs to his own vanity, and salvage to his feelings. His ministers would carry his instructions to Hamilton, and ask his advice, would they? They would get Hamilton behind them in every refractory move, would they? They would betray the President's confidence?

In a fit of rage he forced McHenry to resign. Pickering refused to follow suit, and was summarily dismissed.

Had Wolcott been treated likewise, Mr. Adams might have saved himself the remaining months of leaky confidences; but Wolcott had been cleverer than the other two in keeping up a semblance of friendship, and John was rather too ready, by now, to give him the benefit of the doubt.

It was necessary to find a new Secretary of State, and a new Secretary of the War Department. John appointed Samuel Dexter to the latter, and John Marshall to the Secretaryship of State.

And the fourth year of this seething administration passed.

The day of a new election dawned, when John Adams might know whether the people of his country realized what he had striven

to do for them—what he had, in fact, accomplished; that he had saved them from war and its ills.

It was at this moment that Alexander Hamilton, the dictator of the Federalist party policy, chose to write and issue among his friends a sweeping denunciation of John Adams, his private and public character, and all his works.

CHAPTER LIV

DEFEAT

IT was what Hamilton—failing, for once in his astute career, to perceive an obvious folly—imagined to be his last hope of saving the party.

He had cherished, once, another hope, that had been frustrated for all time in a manner that brought sincerest grief to him and to his country.

Washington was dead. He had died a private gentleman, on his own estate at Mount Vernon, as he had wished. And the plan of Alexander Hamilton, to win this noble figure from its retirement and use it as the wedge with which to drive Adams back whence he had come, could never be—if, indeed, any inducements could ever have won George Washington from peace with glory. He had not lived to the moment of its suggestion.

But Hamilton was not beaten yet. He toured New England, and found that confidence in Federalism still meant confidence in Adams in that section of the country, at least.

That it would be a contest between Adams and Jefferson was by this time a foregone conclusion. The party was in discredit, if Adams was not. What possessed Hamilton to destroy, wilfully, the last hope of the Federalist party for re-election into power, could only have been an almost insane personal hatred. This was evidenced

by the fact that his written attack on John Adams, after attributing to him every incompetence and sign of unfitness for the position he lately occupied, recommended him, actually, for re-election! He had many collaborators—willing and as prejudiced as he; and not the least among them was Wolcott.

The calmer of the Federalists said it was unwise. How unwise, they were all yet to realize. Hamilton wrote a personal letter to John Adams, demanding an answer to the charge that John belonged to a British clique. Unanswered, he wrote his other letter. . . .

Unfortunately, Hamilton himself possessed his enemies. One of the most potent of these—a rival in private life as well as public—was Aaron Burr. Into Aaron Burr's hands a copy of this semi-private letter came.

And the Democrats had their campaign material!

So it was that Abigail came to write to her son Thomas, on the thirteenth of November, 1800, from Washington, the new Government seat, where she had journeyed to stand by the President in the hour of his disillusionment:

"Well, my dear son, South Carolina has behaved as your father always said she would. The consequence to us, personally, is, that we retire from public life. For myself and family, I have few regrets. At my age, and with my bodily infirmities, I shall be happier at Quincy. Neither my habits, nor my education or inclinations, have led me to an expensive style of living, so that on that score I have little to mourn over. If I did not rise with dignity, I can at least fall with ease, which is the more difficult task. I wish your father's circumstances were not so limited and circumscribed, as they must be, because he cannot indulge himself in those improvements upon his farm, which his inclination leads him to, and which would serve to amuse him, and contribute to his health. I feel not any resentment against those who are coming into power, and only wish the future administration of the government may be as productive of the peace, happiness and prosperity of the nation, as the two former ones have been. I leave to time the unfolding of a drama. I leave to posterity to reflect upon the times past; and I leave them characters to contemplate. My own intention is to return to Quincy as soon as I conveniently can; I presume in the month of January.

"Governor Davie arrived yesterday with the treaty. Judge Ellsworth was landed in England for the benefit of his health. The public curiosity will be soon satisfied. Peace with France—a revenue increased beyond any former years—our prospects brightening upon every side. What must be the thoughts and the reflections of those who, calling themselves Federalists, have placed their country in a situation full of dangers and perils; who have wantonly thrown away the blessings Heaven seemed to have in reserve for them? The defection of New York has been the source. That defection was produced by the intrigue of two men. One of them sowed the seeds of discontent and division amongst the Federalists, and the other seized the lucky moment of mounting into power upon the shoulders of Jefferson. The triumph of the Jacobins is immoderate, and the Federalists deserve it. It is an old and a just proverb, 'Never halloo until you are out of the woods.' So completely have they gulled one another by their Southern promises, which have no more faith, when made to Northern men, than lovers' vows. . . ."

Jefferson was chosen. And the man whom Abigail drew as climbing to power on Jefferson's shoulders, through lucky intrigue—Aaron Burr—would be Vice President.

CHAPTER LV

RELINQUISHMENT

SO this was Washington—this gracious clearing amid the forests, with a few incompleted buildings scattered upon a hill? Twelve years of planning had not made a city of it, or caused it even to smile serenely on its uglier neighbor, Georgetown. When the man, Briesler, came here to make ready for the President, no work had yet been done on the inside of their house, and even now no single room was quite finished, and there was no place outside that Abigail could call a yard or garden.

Yet the loveliness that might be, showed itself. A worthy piece of the countryside for the capital of the nation. Its beauty must grow

gradually, as its awkward newness passed away. With John, she could bless this house, and those that were to inhabit it in the future, and pray that none but honest and wise men might ever rule there.

He had not told her what the house, or the city, either, was like, though he had been here the previous June on a visit of inspection. He had reported nothing but that he "liked the seat of government very well" and that he had ridden over to Mount Vernon to enjoy its beauty and the bountiful hospitality of Mrs. Washington, who had sent, as she always did, most friendly greetings to Abigail and all her children.

But he *had* told her how happy it made him that she would be by his side in the last, trying three months of his Presidency; and after that not all the weaknesses and reluctances in the world could have kept her from him.

She had come by way of Baltimore, on a drive beset with incident. They had lost themselves in the forest, off on a wrong road, and had only been rescued and brought back to their path when a wandering negro, who knew the way, had stumbled on them. They had ridden through the woods from Baltimore to here, the only signs of life being scattered cottages—mere windowless shacks that the woodsmen used. She was glad to get to the city, as they called it—even though the first sight of the handful of scattered buildings was something of a disappointment.

The President's House stood on a hill-top, with some smaller edifices in its lee. A gently-sloping meadow lay before it, not bound off by any fence or rail. The building itself was three stories high, and many-windowed, with an arched door surmounted by columns, and a slanting roof. The river ran at the foot of the hill. Abigail could see it from her window, and the ships that came and went. A gracious home—from the outside! But the interior of the house—or what would be the interior, when it was but finished—!

It was a magnificent house—a castle, almost, that would require a staff of many servants to keep it in order. But—no lusters or lamps enough, as yet! They must stick candles where they might. No bells,

in any of the rooms. They must shout, for their help. Damp plaster, so that fires must be kept going everywhere.

And, of course, the ladies of Washington and of Georgetown calling on Abigail all the time. She must fit the place up somehow—return the calls—run back home; see that Briesler has got the man to deliver the firewood. Forests, forests all around them, but no one, it seemed, to cut or cart wood. And no grates in any of the rooms, or they could have burned coals!

No conveniences—no comforts. No back-fenced yard to dry the clothes in! But come, Esther and Polly! Get through with the washing all the same. We will hang it in that great, unfinished audience-room! It couldn't be used for many a day for any other purpose, anyway.

She worked like a village housema'am without any hired help. The chief staircase was not up; indeed, the outer steps were not, either, and the family must enter the house by a temporary wooden stair and platform.

Somehow Abigail made a home and an Executive mansion for them in six of the crude rooms—two bedrooms, a parlor, a levee-room, and upstairs—there was a servants' flight of stairs, in the rear of the building—a handsome oval apartment where Abigail put her crimson drawing-room furniture.

So many little annoyances! Some of her precious china stolen, somewhere on the road; nothing to be bought to replace it, even in the Georgetown stores; the road that John must traverse from here to the uncompleted Capitol building, a mile away, an unrelieved morass of bogland.

Well, she must live here for three months or so, and make herself and her household as comfortable as she could. Her neighbors—Mrs. Otis, in lodgings a mile away, and the ladies of the Senators and Congressmen, here and in Georgetown—were showing her once more how much her company was desired; showering attentions and offers of help on her. Mrs. Washington, from Mount Vernon, sent her an invitation to visit her; her grandchildren, Major Custis

From an original Sketch taken on the spot by C. N. Jansen Esqr.

The President's House in Washington: lately taken & destroyed by the British Army!

and Mrs. Lewis, wrote most kindly also, and the Major sent a fine haunch of venison.

Abigail managed, by keeping the fires going and the doors closed, to get the place into a semblance of warmth. She was waiting for her dress-trunks to arrive, and trying to make the best of her too-small mirrors and her too-few lamps. She could turn her eyes away from the brick-fields that lay around, and the wilderness. George Washington's vision of a city of radiating avenues had materialized into no more than a wilderness as yet, for the reason that Congress had never been able to agree on a sufficient appropriation to complete it. But if to drive for miles through the swamps was trying, and to hear tales of snakes and other frightening creatures, as she visited this lady and that in the widely-scattered community, horrified her—well, she could tell herself, at least it was only for three months.

Only for three months!

Congress met for the first time in Washington on the twenty-second of November, 1800, when John Adams opened the first and last session there. It was a nerve-racking term in every way for him. The triumph of the Jacobins was certainly not hidden. The sight of Jefferson, his victorious rival, was unbearable to him. Neither his health nor his wife's was by any means good; and his financial condition, above all, was not half sufficient for the running of the new President's House.

It had been a terrible year, both for John and Abigail—a year of stress in public life; a year of bereavement in private. Charles, never robust, passed away late in that year of 1800, at thirty years of age. It was a crushing grief, added to the ill-health of his mother and the official cares of his father.

His father was still John Adams, however. With his flag of pride flying, he had purchased a new pair of horses to add to his team, and ridden into the new city of Washington in full state. With undiminished reverence for country and position, and undiminished dignity to set against hostility, the unpopular John Adams and his

popular lady had held their final New Year's reception in the temporary levee-room of the President's House.

And the Federalist party? Dead and gone! Yet—was it without a redeeming spark of life?

Almost—not quite.

Ellsworth, assigned to France, and also suffering poor health, had recently resigned his office as Chief Justice of the United States. It was for John Adams, as one of his final Presidential acts, to nominate a successor for Ellsworth. His choice was Jay—an obvious choice. But Jay refused—on account of ill-health and also because he strongly disapproved of the system which forced the Supreme Court Judges to act as Circuit Judges also. And now came the tug of war—for John Adams' second choice was John Marshall of Virginia, his Secretary of State, a very able lawyer and a very good Federalist, but of no actual experience on the Bench.

There was a wild outcry. Patterson, wailed Wolcott, Pickering and the rest—Patterson, Ellsworth's associate justice, was the man! Nobody wanted Marshall.

But Mr. Adams had watched John Marshall, and he knew the choice was a wise one.

He stood firm, therefore, while they accused him, bitterly, of shutting out abler men because they were Hamilton's friends, of being stubborn and obstinate, even crazy. They said he would live to regret it. But as long as John Adams lived—and Marshall was confirmed, under protest—he never regretted any action of his life as little as this one. He had given America a great man—a great Chief Justice—a great statesman, as time was to show.

And incidentally he had struck a telling blow at the power of the new President, Jefferson's, party, for he had put one of the ablest and most stalwart Federalists in command of the country's judiciary, and preserved the original tenets of Federalism in the prosecution of the law at least!

There was much to do—many final, delayed commissions to sign, many knotty points of pride and prejudice to unravel, before

he could go home to his mansion at Quincy. But Abigail had sacrificed herself in coming here to stand at his side! She was fever-ridden again—so sick, indeed, that he yearned over her too constantly for the little peace of mind which he might yet have enjoyed. He sent her home ahead of him. She could make ready that haven in whose grateful shelter they might—at last—seclude themselves together, never to be parted again, by politics or parties, embassies or courts, till the Supremest Court of all might part them temporarily for the final time. . . .

She went home, leaving John to prepare the way for Jefferson—the erstwhile friend on whose face he could no more bear to look, because Jefferson was the instrument, and apparently no longer the unwilling instrument, of a defeat that he felt to be unearned.

Jefferson had become the symbol of Mr. Adams' baffled rage. Hamilton had been crushed by the fall of the edifice that he himself had craftily set up; but Jefferson—Jefferson stood in the place where John Adams should stand, by all the rights of service and sacrifice.

So much was true. He had served his country faithfully and well. He had saved her from war, and from the fruits of political intrigue, so long as he had lasted. He had aided ably in the initial plans, and in the fight for liberty; he had helped finance her when she stood in utmost need financially; he had gained recognition for her in foreign lands. And now he was cast out,—mainly, he felt, because Alexander Hamilton had found him an obstacle to dictatorship.

And Jefferson was in!

On the fourth of March, Thomas Jefferson would ride along the swampy road to the Capitol, and be sworn in as Chief Magistrate.

John Adams would not wait to see this accomplished. He would clear up for Jefferson—finish his work and go. He would leave Jefferson no vestige or sign of the man he had vanquished—no embarrassments hanging on to former friendship.

He called John Quincy home now—an unreluctant John Quincy

enough, as far as coming home went; for he had accomplished a sound commercial treaty with the Prussian government, and there had been little else to do save travel sightseeing about the European countries with his wife till they should be recalled.

Jefferson should have no embarrassments of *that* kind. Till early morning of March the fourth, Mr. Adams sat up writing—signing appointments and clearing up papers, shipping off his furniture and winding up the business of the session. He had given his final feast, held his final levee, received the final expressions of friends and near-friends, the final warm messages for his well-liked Abigail.

And when March the fourth was only a few hours old, Mr. Adams called his man and entered his coach and drove away from Washington and public life for ever.

He was past amenities and customs! He could not have shaken his successor's hand to save his life!

CHAPTER LVI

HONOR

THE voice of the pastor was low and pleasant. His discourse carried an undertone of painstaking care and earnest elevation. His words held humility—a rather curious mixture of worldly and spiritual awe. But that had become a part of the atmosphere here. It pervaded those who sat in the rearward pews; it was in the air they breathed, in the strains of melody that floated down from the gallery, where the woodwinds and the stringed instruments led the hymn-singing. It rested like a benediction on the devout white head of the portly old gentleman who sat in the foremost pew.

The eyes of everyone wandered to that pew many times during the services; the eyes of the pastor were at pains to keep from it—from returning in kind the devout attention of the President (as

those in Quincy never ceased to call him) and of his gracious lady and the niece—another niece—who had come to live with them in their old age.

John and Abigail had grown accustomed to the sensation of all those eyes, casting veneration at them. It had become, indeed, a part of the ceremony, not detracting from it, for there was praise to God both in the receipt and in the giving.

The sermon closed. The last hymn was lustily sung. The faithful of Quincy filed out of the meeting-house into the clear New England sunshine.

In homespuns, the "Atlas of Independence" stood on the porch of Quincy meeting house. They grasped his hand, these people who were his own. They bowed and smiled to the contented Abigail, and asked her how she did. They beamed good-will on the President and his lady.

Abigail exchanged a few words with Rev. Whitney, who kept the school that Thaxter used to keep. She could tell Mr. Whitney her health was much improved. She was able to do her chores and to rise at dawn as she used. The bracing air of Quincy, as she had expected, had soon restored her.

And the cleric, beyond doubt, answered that Quincy was proud to see Mrs. Adams and the President looking so well, and inquired for her family.

Alas! Little Abby was sick—in great suffering. They feared for her.

And her sons?

Her sons did well, she would answer, with the little dip of farewell to Charles in her voice. Her grandchildren— Once again the smile would come to her eyes. What was a grandmother to say about her grandchildren? They were all fine men and women to her!

Her sons did well indeed. John Quincy had come home, bringing a wife and two small sons of his own, and had entered again into his Boston practice. It had been that practice, curiously enough,

which had led to Abigail's own final and irreparable break with her former much-admired friend, the new President, Jefferson. The judge of the district court had appointed John Quincy a commissioner in bankruptcy on his resumption of business as a lawyer. The appointment coincided with the moving and passing in Congress of a new statute vesting in the President of the United States the power to remove officers of the law. And the President, in the initial exercise of this authority, had removed Mr. John Quincy Adams. . . . If it was a blow aimed at father or son, it hit neither so hard as it did the wife and mother. She could never forgive Jefferson for this.

Not that it retarded John Quincy's political progress. In the year following, he had been the choice of the Boston Federalists as Representative in the State Senate, and had accepted the seat. He was proving, from the first, a good son of his father. If the Federalists had thought to strengthen beyond all danger their one-sided power in the Massachusetts State Senate, they had counted without their host. What the young statesman, John Quincy Adams, wanted was sound goverment for his state, and he proceeded to follow up his views according to his lights. In an initial motion which was quashed at its birth, he showed at least which course he meant to pursue throughout his political life—an individual one, as his father had done before him.

And Thomas, the youngest, was become a judge, and was to rise to the highest seat on the bench of his State. . . .

So old age was not wholly withdrawn from state affairs, or from a local honor that, indeed, had tendrils spreading far and wide, and that had never swerved from "the President."

"How do you, sir?" We see old John, turning from the last handshaking townsman, the last curtseying child, and joining Abigail and her pastor, "and how," beaming down, "does the young gentleman who stands beside you?"

The "young gentleman"—a little lad of seven—pulls off his hat and bobs his head shyly at John, at Abigail.

Abigail laughs at him.

"And are you coming home with us, little Josiah? Will Mr. Whitney say that you may take dinner with us?"

"Why, assuredly, madam," Good Mr. Whitney, finding tongue for the tongue-tied Josiah Quincy—the grandson of that other young Josiah whose health had not withstood an agonizing sea voyage in the service of his country. "He looks forward to it all through the week."

Indeed the little boy was delighted to go along, walking, perhaps, hand in hand with young Miss Smith, down the white road to the mansion. They walked home each fair Sunday. The plain carriage with the pair of fine dark horses only came out in Winter, or on rainy Sundays.

They would walk slowly along the road, the elderly pair in front; the niece and the little kinsman following behind, and doubtless stopping to discuss each exciting plant or stone or trickling stream by the roadside. And presently the lovely mansion would come into view, with its embracing piazza and its wide, restful grounds.

The table would be set in the dining-room, whose panels of San Domingo mahogany were yet to be discovered in their handsomeness beneath the layers of white paint that covered them at that time.

Little Josiah made up his mind, each Sunday, not to eat too much of the cornmeal pudding. There was a catch in that. Small boys who ate up their cornmeal pudding, which started the meal, were allowed all the juicy meat they wanted after. But of what advantage was that? For if you ate too much of the pudding, there wasn't any room for meat!

The neatly capped and aproned maid would appear with the pudding, and place it before the President. The President would take up a long-handled spoon and prepare to serve; then look across at Josiah.

"Do you remember the iron spoon, Josiah? How we fished it

out of the pudding that day, and how we nearly laughed the house about our ears?"

"Yes, sir. You said you were going to call it iron spoon pudding, instead of cornmeal—but you didn't."

Josiah always forgot his shyness as soon as they sat down to dinner. Somehow the President could jolly him out of it, and Mrs. Adams, in her silk and lace, was always ready to chuckle too.

The pudding was good—too good, as it always was. Josiah sighed as he watched Miss Smith wielding the carving-knife—her assigned part of the proceedings—over the joint of mutton.

"Three slices for you, Josiah?"

Josiah sighed again.

"Thank you, I think two will be sufficient, ma'am. I—I haven't room for more."

They would laugh at him; but such small boy regret was real.* There was veal as well as mutton, there were beans, of course, and cabbage, and carrots and potatoes. But the President's lady poured him a little glass of Madeira wine, and he managed to do the meal as much justice as the pudding would let him!

There was Church again at two, and tea at five, and probably some more visitors to partake of it. And the President and Mrs. Adams and their friends would talk of America and England, of politics and books, of Dr. Priestly, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Siddons, Mr. Kean, of France, of Shakespeare, of More and Lord Byron and Cobbett, of the American Revolution and the traitor, General Arnold, until a small boy's head swam, and they appeared to his youthful aspiring mind like gods who had dwelt on Olympus.

They had dwelt on Olympus indeed, and were resting gratefully from their labors on the heights.

Fever, however, belabored Abigail still, more and more cruelly, making her blood boil and her skin swell and smart. She fought it off, summoning the ready wit that had always till now upheld her.

* So real that Josiah remembered it in his memoirs very many years later.

"My face is yet red," she wrote to her sister Betsey, "but I rode out today and feel much better. I think a little journey would be of service to me; but I find, as years and infirmities increase, my courage and enterprise diminish. Ossian says 'Age is dark and unlovely.' When I look in my glass, I do not much wonder at the story related of a very celebrated painter, Zeuxis, who, it is said, died of laughing at a comical picture he had made of an old woman. If our glass flatters us in youth, it tells us truths in age."

CHAPTER LVII

SHADOW AND SUNLIGHT

ABIGAIL'S old age was like a checkerboard of lights and darks. It had its joys—of permanent reunion, at last, with John; of John Quincy's achievements and the prosperity of his little family; of Thomas' rise. And it had also its sadnesses—the loss of Charles; Abby Smith's sickness, and the reduced circumstances in which that beloved daughter, after her brilliant court and society life, must now pass what looked to be the small remainder of her days. William Smith had boasted too much of his prodigal wealth, and husbanded it too little. They must now retire to a humble farm in Chenango County, New York, and the eldest son, who was to have been a soldier like his father, must set to with his sick mother and help till the fields.

Yet Abigail could find some ray of comfort even in that direction. Not for nothing had she threaded that gay life of Abby's with strands of sound advice, and trained her sternly to the domestic duties. It was sad that she should have to work in her family's support at the end of a life of ease and comparative luxury—but not so sad as if she had spent it reviling her misguided husband, or repining.

And "little Abby" had her compensations too—a lasting love, and a family of gratifying children. Her own daughter, Caroline,

was Abigail's constant correspondent, and one of the joys of the grandmother's days.

Shut up in her room, by sickness or by the rigors of a new winter, Abigail wrote to Caroline Adams Smith—of the frozen state of her farm; of Juno, the dog, whom Caroline had played with as a child—a Juno now as gray and old, Abigail told her granddaughter, as her mistress. She would send humorous journals of her more active days to this granddaughter, on the meager farm in the valley.

"Six o'clock: Rose, and, in imitation of his Britannic Majesty, kindled my own fire. Went to the stairs, as usual, to summon George and Charles." [The men servants.] "Returned to my chamber, dressed myself. No one stirred. Called a second time, with a voice a little raised.

"Seven o'clock. Blockheads not out of bed. Girls in motion. Mean, when I hire another manservant, that he shall come for *one call.*

"Eight o'clock. Fires made, breakfast prepared. L—— in Boston. Mrs. A. at the tea-board. Forgot the sausages. Susan's recollection brought them upon the table.

"*Enter* Ann. 'Ma'am, the man is come with the coals.'

" 'Go, call George to assist him.' (*Exit* Ann.)

"*Enter* Charles. 'Mr. B—— is come with cheese, turnips, etc. Where are they to be put?' 'I will attend to him myself.' (*Exit* Charles.)

"Just seated at the table again.

"*Enter* George with, 'Ma'am, here is a man with a drove of pigs.' A consultation is held upon this important subject, the result of which is the purchase of two spotted swine.

"Nine o'clock. *Enter* Nathaniel, from the upper house, with a message for sundries; and black Thomas's daughter, for sundries. Attended to all these concerns. A little out of sorts that I could not finish my breakfast. Note: never to be incommoded with trifles.

"*Enter* George Adams, from the post office—a large packet from Russia, and from the valley also. Avaunt, all cares—I put you all aside—and thus I find good news from a far country—children, grandchildren, all well. I had no expectation of hearing from Russia this winter, and the pleasure was the greater to obtain letters of so recent a date, and to learn that the family were all in health. For this blessing give I thanks. . . ."

The Russian letters, so welcome, were from that will-o'-the-wisp son, John Quincy. He had gone from State Senate to United States

Senate—not popular in either; not seeking popularity, content with steering a hard straight course. The unpopularity, indeed, was not wholly of his own earning. From his entry into the government body, he had seemed to become the butt of all those—and their name was legion—who imagined that they bore the scars of grievance against his father. The Republicans were natural enemies; the Federalists, in a minority, and blaming John Adams for it, sought to strike back at him through his unfortunate son.

But John Quincy's years in Europe had brought him courage, cool judgment, and an obstinate will—a triple combination which no enemy ever succeeded in breaking through.

He fought a hard fight. He was in the Senate four years—and at the end of them—well, he was at least given a hearing! And once again, in the government of the country, there were Republicans, and Federalists—and an Adams.

In 1808, after a stormy experience, he had resigned, and the following year a new Republican President—Madison—had sent him to Russia as Minister Plenipotentiary—though this had not been accomplished without conflict, either!

John Quincy had sailed, with his wife and youngest son, on the fifth of August, 1809, leaving his two oldest boys, John and George, in the care of his mother at Quincy. He had paid many visits to Quincy during these times of stress. With a wife of his own, and a charming, intelligent one, he yet sought in his mother's counsel that riper wisdom which, starting in girlhood as an eager curiosity, had matured through public life and the political confidence of a husband engaged in the highest public service. Both John and John Quincy were possessed of independent minds and souls and hearts; but both, as long as she lived, sought the seal of Abigail's endorsement,* and knew that her judgment was sound and that her relation to them did not influence the verdict.

The grandsons loved her in the same way. They were sturdy

* "He loved his mother," writes Brooks Adams of his grandfather, John Quincy Adams, "as he never loved another human being on earth."

boys, reminding her of the lost Charles and the little Thomas. They seemed to have absorbed from their father an awe of her, which personal contact mellowed into a loving competition for her smile. They wept, till they were quite big boys, when she reproved them.

CHAPTER LVIII

RECONCILIATION

THE old President had received a letter from Doctor Benjamin Rush, a good friend of Philadelphia days, fellow signer of the Declaration of Independence, fellow adventurer along the road of Revolution.

Its subject was no longer new, but in it was, still, a titillating agitation. It concerned Thomas Jefferson, who had said his final word to Adams eight years ago, when John had been just the age that Jefferson was now—which was sixty-seven.

It was not a new subject. When Jefferson's daughter, Polly, whom the Adamses had known and loved so well, had died, still a young woman, Abigail had been unable to refrain from writing to the bereaved father a sorrowing little note. It might have healed the breach. Jefferson had been more than willing, for his part, that it should. Other letters had passed—unknown to John, it must be confessed. But the dismissal of John Quincy Adams in the early days of the Jefferson administration still stuck in the heart of John Quincy Adams' mother. And Jefferson's explanation of that impulsive act, while exceedingly earnest, now that the excursions and alarms were all in the dim past for this former côterie of friends, had not satisfied Abigail. The correspondence was dropped.

Yet some remained who pondered on that former friendship, of two Olympic figures in the country's early struggle; and fretted over it. Among them was the good doctor, Rush.

We can see old John holding the paper sheets in a hand still plump, but shaking with the palsy—for his prime was past and his health had been spent too earnestly.

We can picture him coughing, and blowing out his cheeks a little; and frowning into the glass of cider that Abigail had set beside him on the table, and calling her finally from her work.

"This—hum!—matter has come up again, my dear. Our friend Dr. Rush is writing again of Jefferson."

But Abigail, though perhaps she smiled, would not participate.

Why, then he would write back, would he not, as he did before, and say that he felt as he did about the matter? Or would he let it go unanswered?

"H'm'm'm!" And we can perhaps excuse him for feeling somehow a trifle annoyed with his beloved that she should be so suddenly obtuse. "Hum'm! I—er—cannot let a letter go unanswered. I never have—a friend's letter, that is to say."

"Why—then—did you not say there were points you neglected to make clear before, when Doctor Rush approached you? Will you not set them forth now?"

"That is what I had thought of doing." Thus old Obstinate, hiding his relief that he could with dignity keep the matter open. "Will you write for me, my dear? Your hand is so much steadier than mine."

So the old gentleman dictated and the old lady wrote his words down, and this is the letter as it came to the Doctor:—

"My dear Doctor Rush:

"I never was so much at a loss how to answer a letter as yours of the 16th.

"Shall I assume a sober face and write a grave essay on religion, philosophy, laws, or government?

"Shall I assume the man of the world, the fine gentleman, the courtier, and bow and scrape, with a smooth, smiling face, soft words, many compliments and apologies; think myself highly honored, bound in gratitude, &c., &c., &c.?

"I perceive plainly enough, Rush, that you have been teasing Jefferson to write to me, as you did me some time ago to write to him. You gravely advise

me 'to receive the olive branch,' as if there had been war; but there has never been any hostility on my part, nor that I know, on his. When there has been no war, there can be no room for negotiations of peace.

"Mr. Jefferson speaks of my political opinions; but I know of no difference between him and myself relative to the Constitution, or to forms of government in general. In measures of administration, we have differed in opinion. I have never approved the repeal of the judicial law, the repeal of the taxes, the neglect of the navy; and I have always believed that his system of gunboats for a national defence was defective. To make it complete, he ought to have taken a hint from Moliere's 'Femmes precieuses,' or his learned ladies, and appointed three or four brigades of horse, with a major-general and three or four brigadiers, to serve on board his galleys of Malta. I have never approved his non-embargo, or any non-intercourse or non-importation laws.

"But I have raised no clamors nor made any opposition to any of these measures. The nation approved them; and what is my judgment against that of the nation? On the contrary, he disapproved of the alien and sedition law, which I believe to have been constitutional and salutary, if not necessary.

"He disapproved of the eight per cent loan, and with good reason, for I hated it as much as any man, and the army, too, which occasioned it. He disapproved, perhaps, of the partial war with France, which I believed, as far as it proceeded, to be a holy war. He disapproved of taxes, and perhaps the whole scheme of my administration, &c., and so perhaps did the nation. But his administration and mine are passed away into the dark backwards, and now are of no more importance than the administration of the old Congress in 1774 and 1775.

"We differed in opinion about the French Revolution. He thought it wise and good, and it would end in the establishment of a free republic. I saw through it, to the end of it, before it broke out, and was sure it could end only in a restoration of the Bourbons, or a military despotism, after deluging France and Europe in blood. In this opinion I differed from you as much as from Jefferson; but all this made me no more of an enemy to you than to him, nor to him than to you. I believe you both mean well to mankind and your country. I might suspect you both to sacrifice a little to the infernal Gods, and perhaps unconsciously to suffer your judgments to be a little swayed by a love of popularity, and possibly by a little spice of ambition.

"In point of republicanism, all the difference I ever knew or could discover between you and me, or between Jefferson and me, consisted,

"1. In the difference between speeches and messages. I was a monarchist because I thought a speech more manly, more respectful to Congress and the nation. Jefferson and Rush preferred messages.

"2. I held levees once a week, that all my time might not be wasted by idle visits. Jefferson's whole eight years was a levee.

"3. I dined a large company once or twice a week. Jefferson dined a dozen every day.

"4. Jefferson and Rush were for liberty and straight hair. I thought curled hair was as republican as straight.

"In these, and a few other points of equal importance, all miserable frivolities, that Jefferson and Rush ought to blush that they ever laid any stress upon them, I might differ; but I never knew any points of more consequence, on which there was any variation between us.

"You exhort me to 'forgiveness and love of enemies,' as if I considered, or ever had considered, Jefferson as my enemy. This is not so; I have always loved him as a friend. If I ever received or suspected an injury from him, I have forgotten it long and long ago, and have no more resentment against him than against you.

"You enforce your exhortations by the most solemn considerations that can enter the human mind. After mature reflection upon them, and laying them properly to heart, I could not help feeling that they were so unnecessary, that you must excuse me if I had some inclination to be ludicrous.

"You often put me in mind that I am soon to die; I know it, and shall not forget it. Stepping into my kitchen one day, I found two of my poor neighbors, as good sort of men as two drunkards could be. One had sotted himself into a consumption. His cough and his paleness and weakness showed him near the last stage. Tom, who was not so far gone as yet, though he soon followed, said to John, 'You have not long for this world.' John answered very quick; 'I know it, Tom, as well as you do; but why do you tell me of it, I had rather you should strike me.' This was one of those touches of nature which Shakespere or Cervantes would have noted in his ivory book.

"But why do you make so much about nothing? Of what use can it be for Jefferson and me to exchange letters? I have nothing to say to him, but to wish him an easy journey to heaven, when he goes, which I wish may be delayed, as long as life shall be agreeable to him. And he can have nothing to say to me, but to bid me make haste and be ready. Time and chance, however, or possibly design, may produce ere long a letter between us."

Having got which supreme piece of bluff off his chest, he certainly could not have surprised the understanding Abigail in the least when, six brief days later, he begged her once again to write a letter for him, and, doubtless with the smile of a keen and mel-

lowed old age for the vanities and foibles of youth, dictated a missive inspired with the sweet breath of good humor and good-will—to Thomas Jefferson, at Monticello.

The promptness of Jefferson's reply spoke volumes. Volumes might, indeed, be devoted to this glad renewal of a rare old friendship, if space permitted. Suffice it to say that this was the beginning of an interchange of thought and sentiment, of theory and deduction, of philosophy and religion, of news and hopes and fears, of gratifications and of sorrows, that was to last them till death. They were friends once more, and the happier for it.

CHAPTER LIX

ANGUISH—AND PEACE

IT was war again—war drums sounding afar from Napoleonic France; war-clouds bursting over free America. And the enemy of America was the same as before—the Mother country.

Once more British men-of-war patrolled the Boston waters. Once more Americans lay entrenched on the heights across at Dorchester. Once more anguish for her country and for the world was to fill the heart of Abigail Adams.

Only once more. But she had had more than her share of anguish already—and personal anguish was with her also, even now.

The beloved daughter's health had faded slowly, painfully. On the meager farm in the valley of Chenango, the Colonel had watched his cherished wife's pain, and suffered agonies with her. And at the last he had sent her to her parents, to procure the best medical advice, the best of treatment. They were only too eager to give what he could no longer afford.

The doctors operated, and prolonged her days, maybe—but a little only; for in the following year, 1813, in the midst of war's alarms once more, little Abby died.

It was an overwhelming grief to John and Abigail, the loss of this beloved daughter; a grief from which they never quite recovered.

Another year passed. In the bay of Boston, visible from that Penn's Hill where Abigail had stood as a young wife, holding little Johnny Quincy by the hand, the *Chesapeake* had sent the British *Shannon* foundering to defeat. But victory and defeat took turns, and balanced themselves, on one side and then on the other, and still the war raged, on American soil.

It was 1814. It was October. Fifty years had passed since John Adams and Abigail Smith had plighted their troth in the neighboring town of Weymouth.

They had known many partings. They had known excitement of war, of politics, of travel. They had known joy and sorrow; but they had ever been happy in each other. Always there had been Abigail's urgent, saving grace of humor to carry her over irate spots. Always there had been, in this fiery fighting President, an unfailing tolerance for whatever action or deportment towards himself his beloved wife deemed right. And so they had lived in amity, and could celebrate their golden wedding with joy in their hearts and a most profound thankfulness that they were still together, who had been put asunder so much in the early days of their married life.

John had not altered—though he had mellowed with the years. He could still explode over things not worth the effort. He still spoke words, and wrote them, too, which were better unspoken or unwritten.

But—Abigail was there now. She could smile at the words. She could take the letters, stealthily, and secrete them—or some of them —till wrath had blown over and the post-rider was saved a fraction of his burden. In her hands "the President" was a young lover still, and an ardent devotee. What she chose to do was right—even if she

did take the most unpardonable liberties with his private correspondence!

So they celebrated their golden wedding, in the old mansion at Quincy, with one child—Thomas—and several grandchildren, and many well-wishers around them.

It was February, and the church bells were ringing—ringing furiously. But ringing bells, like sounding guns, or rolling drums, or lost ships, or houses shaken within their walls, were no new story on the fretted coast of Boston. The war was into its third year; the outlook little changed from the second year's depression.

There came the sound of a gun—like a memory echoing down the years to the old couple in the Quincy mansion. To John Quincy's two young lads, running into the hall to open the door, it would mean some new excitement.

There was a drum rolling, down the road. There were men, and women, too, marching along. Dancing along!

The bells pealed out, again and again. The drum continued to roll.

A word flew through the little town like a flash.

"Peace!"

Down the road came the clatter of soldiers' horses. Upon the snow that banked it glided a sled, pulled by many steeds. In the sled were sailors—many, in cocked hats with papers stuck in. And on the papers showed one word, written large.

PEACE!

The War of 1812 was over. Washington, the city of Independence's blossoming, lay in ruins. Many lives had burned away. Many sacrifices had gone to swell history further, or to live immortally, unsung. But war, at last, was over. America might dwindle into Quincy's confines once more for the aged John and Abigail.

Quincy was ringing with joy—vibrating with gladness—an augury of truth for the years that remained to Abigail. There were to be no more wars for her—no more bereavements; nothing but

love, and gratification at the increasing brilliance of the public career of her eldest son; and peace.

John Quincy had listened with Russia to the sinister rumblings of the victory-lusting Napoleon; he had seen Russia, his temporary home, bleed beneath the invader's heel; then wrest herself free, and crush the invader in his turn. He had seen St. Petersburg go mad with joy, even as little Quincy was going wild with it now. And the joy of this peace had made him doubly anxious for the peace of his own country. He had seized with avidity the offer of the Russian Count Romanzoff to mediate between the United States and England.

He had gone to Ghent at the call of his government, and helped to make that peace—fought for it, indeed, with true Adams integrity.

America was satisfied, if England was not. From England John Quincy Adams enjoyed an era of abuse which did more to endear him to his own countrymen than any act of his own so far had done.

Thence he had proceeded to Paris, to witness Napoleon's return and the happenings, empire-shaking, of the historic "Hundred days."

But there was further occupation for him—more onerous, less welcome—in Europe before he sailed for home once more. He was made Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary to England.

As Minister to England, John Quincy Adams' deportment had won him respect, at least, and his efforts in the diplomatic line had wrung from Lord Castlereagh a lifting of some of the pressure that had been put on American trade with the West Indies.

But he, like his parents, hated banquets and "table-cloth oratory," which formed so great a part of his life these days. His wife and his youngest son, Charles Francis Adams, had taken an eventful journey in their coach across the war-scarred continent from Russia, and joined him in Paris, later crossing with him to London. But America, as they well knew, was not so popular at the British court

as she had been at the Russian. And living expenses were so high that the greatest rigidity of economy would hardly meet them.

John Quincy Adams and Louise, his wife, were both glad and ready, therefore, when Monroe, the newly-inaugurated fifth President, called him home in June, 1817, to take the position of Secretary of State in the newly-reorganized United States Cabinet.

Abigail had her Johnny home again, and there was no more waiting for news.

It was peace—peace for their country; peace for Abigail—the peace that comes with the end of a long and brim-full life. And the crowning gratification had been the elevation of this well-loved son. She could rejoice that she had filled his every day, so long as she could control his days, with the greatness and urgency of service to his country. Through that service he had risen to one of the highest positions that his country had to offer.

He was to rise higher yet; but she was not to be there to see it.

One year she had enjoyed him, adding him to the delightful consolations of an honored old age.

And now she lay abed, to rise no more. The enemy, typhus, had claimed her, at last, for ever. She was dying as she had lived, cheerful, brave, taking suffering as the leavening of peace.

They left old John alone with her at the last—the two lovers alone; the children effacing themselves. He bent over her, so frail now in the vast canopied cavern of their bed. He held her swollen hands in his. He kissed her, tenderly, his old head shaking.

"Do not grieve, my friend—my dearest friend," she said, and she smiled, but it was a smile of pain. "I am ready to go, and—John, it will not be long."

She died on the twenty-eighth of October, 1818, aged seventy-four.

In the gracious house at Quincy, John Adams dwelt alone, and mourned his Abigail.

There were many to share his grief. Friends and admirers from all over the country had traveled to attend her obsequies. Beautiful words had been spoken across the gap that her gentle passing had opened up.

But no words—nothing, save reunion now, could close that gap for John Adams.

His dearest friend had left him. The years as fellow-campaigners along the road of life—fellow travelers on the high seas of perplexity and strange upheavals—were over. She had been his dearest friend indeed. . . .

For eight years he was to dwell alone, with his memories, his letters and the honors that were heaped on him in his old age.

And on the Fourth of July, 1826—while guns, as he had prophesied, were firing to commemorate the birth date of "the child Independence"—while Jefferson, their friend, in far-off Monticello, was likewise breathing his last—while "little Johnny Quincy" presided over the country from the White House in Washington,—John, his ninety years full spent, joined his Abigail once more.

THE END.

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INDEX

Active, Trader, 209.
Adams, Abigail, the younger (see also Mrs. William Stephens Smith), 16, 18, 21, 27, 39, 47, 53, 60, 64, 72, 103, 106, 166, 169, 186, 204, 209, 210, 219, 221, 227, 229, 233, 236-7, 242; marriage of, 249-50, 294.
Adams, Brooks, 317.
Adams, Charles, 34, 39, 47, 103, 107, 136, 159, 175, 186, 189, 190, 194, 195, 268, 280, 294; death of, 307, 315.
Adams, Charles Francis, 317, 325.
Adams, Elihu, 7, 17, 100, 102, 103.
Adams Family, 59, 143, 231-2.
Adams, George, 316-17, 324.
Adams House; in Brattle Square, Boston, 18; in Cole Lane, Boston, 25; near Paris, 232; in London, 244, 247; in New York, 268; in Philadelphia, 269; in Philadelphia at beginning of Adams' Presidency, 289. (See also "Braintree" and "Quincy").
*Adams, John (see footnote).
Adams, John, Sr., 7, 17.
Adams, John, son of John Quincy Adams, 317, 324.
Adams, Mrs. John, Sr. (Suzanna Boylston), 17, 74, 87, 107, 134, 168, 276, 284.
Adams, John Quincy, 18, 21, 27, 39, 47, 53, 60, 64, 65, 72, 74; watches Battle of Bunker Hill, 82, 84, 103, 107, 133; becomes a post-rider, 141-4, 145, 147, 150, 159, 169, 170-1, 172, 179, 181, 184, 187, 189, 190, 191; at Leyden University, 195; goes to St. Petersburg, 195, 201, 205, 218; meets mother and sister in London, 226-7, 234-5, 236-8, 240, 241, 247, 257; at Harvard College, 261, 268, 273, 274; Noms de plume of, 275; Ambassador to Holland, 275, 280; in England, 280; marriage of, 293; comes home from Prussia, 309-10; family, 311-12, 315; in Russia, 316, 317, 325; at Ghent for Treaty of Peace, 325; in Paris during "Hundred Days," 325; Minister to England, 325; Secretary of State, 326; President, 327.
Adams, Louisa Catherine (Johnson), 325.
Adams Mansion at Quincy, 293.
Adams, Peter Boylston, 7, 17, 107, 159.
Adams, Samuel, 13, 19, 37, 44-5, 49, 52, 58, 62, 65, 66, 89, 109, 130, 137, 150, 151, 164, 171, 182, 183, 283.
Adams, Mrs. Samuel, 99, 137.
Adams, Thomas Boylston, 39, 47, 72, 101, 102, 103, 107, 159, 175, 268-70, 278, 293-4, 303, 312, 315, 324.
d'Adhemar, Comte, 255.
Alien and Sedition Acts, 296.
Allen sisters, 270.
"Amazons" of Braintree, The, 152.
André, Major, 270.
d'Aranda, Duc, 198, 199.
Arnold, Benedict, 157-8, 165; treachery of, 195.
Atkinson family, 220, 224, 226, 228.

Barré, Major, 42.
Barrington, Minister for America, 42.
Bath, Mrs. Adams' visit to, 257-9.
Bedford, Duchess of, 255.
Bennington, 157.
Bergen Point, 142.
Bingham, Anne (Willing), 247, 249, 270.
Bois de Boulogne, 232.
Boston, Mass., 8, 13, 14, 15, 18, 21, 22; Massacre, 24-31, 28, 32, 35; Tea Party, 35-39; Blockade of, 42; Port Bill, 43, 45, 50, 53, 54; Rumor of Bombardment, 58, 59, 61, 65, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 74, 77-8, 80-1, 91, 94, 95, 96, 98, 100, 105-7, 110-11, 115-18; Liberation of, 117, 120, 129-30, 133-4, 136, 147-8, 153, 154.
"Boston Blockade, The," Play by Burgoyne, 104.
Boston *Centinel*, 275.
Boston Common, 46, 92, 117, 118.

*John Adams figures so largely in this life of his wife that a complete perusal is necessary in order to follow his part in it. Therefore his name, like hers, has been omitted from the index.

Boston, Frigate, 169; takes Mr. Adams to France, 171.
Boston *Gazette*, 66.
Bounty for Recruits, 140-1.
Bowdoin, James, 45, 49, 132.
Boylston, Dr. Zabaliel, 17.
Braintree, 3, 11, 15, 18, 19, 21, 34, 36, 47, 54, 55, 61, 65, 82, 114, 129, 141 (see also "Quincy" and "Adams House").
Brandywine, Defeat at, 163.
Brattle, Colonel, 54, 201, 283.
Brattle Square, Boston, 18, 26, 54, 232.
Brattle Street Church, Boston, 21, 54, 105.
Breed's Hill, 21, 80.
Bridgen, Mr., 258.
Briesler the manservant, 209-10, 229, 269, 304, 306.
British Court, The, 202; Adams as Minister to, 239, 240; Mrs. Adams' presentation at, 241-2, 243, 244-5.
British Fleet, 76, 77, 82, 96, 115, 136, 145, 153, 156.
British Soldiers in Boston, 20, 22, 25, 81, 95, 105, 109, 110, 117.
Bullock, Archibald, 134.
"Bunch of Grapes" Tavern, Boston, 118.
Bunker Hill, 21, 35, 76, 77; Battle of, 80, 85, 88, 91, 104.
Burgoyne, General John, 41, 77, 81, 91, 98, 104, 105, 153, 156, 157, 163, 164-5.
Burr, Aaron, 303, 304.
Byles, Rev. Mather, 105.

Callaghan, Captain, 221.
Canterbury, Archbishop of, officiates at "Abby's" wedding, 251.
Capitol, The, 306.
Carmarthen, Earl of, 244, 252.
Castle Island, 21, 41, 116.
Castlereagh, Lord, 325.
Charles River, 80, 82, 83.
Charleston, S. C., 36; Battle of, 135.
Charlestown, 21, 46, 54, 81-3, 85, 96.
Charlestown Neck, 54, 85, 117.
Chesapeake Bay, 151, 158.
Chesapeake and Shannon episode, 323.
Chew, Peggy, 270.
Chew sisters, 291.
Chief Justiceship of Massachusetts, Offer of to John Adams, 100, 111.
Clinton, General Sir Henry, 77, 81, 82, 105, 145, 188, 277.
Committees of Correspondence, 44.
"Common Sense," Thomas Paine's, 123.
Conciliationists, 87.
Confederation Resolution, 126, 127.
Congress Hall, Philadelphia, 89-90.
Constitution of United States, 264.
Continental Congress, First, 49, 51, 57, 58-60, 63, 65; Second, 69, 85, 87-90, 95, 107-8, 109, 112, 113, 118, 124, 128, 136, 139, 140, 149.
Coolidge's Hostelry, 50.
Copp's Hill, 81-3.
Cornwallis, General, 145, 149, 152, 164, 185, 195.
Copley, John Singleton, 222; painting of John Adams, 222.
Cranch, Betsey, 166, 226, 233.
Cranch family, Visit to, in Devonshire, 261, 262.
Cranch, Lucy, 166.
Cranch, Mrs. Richard (see also Mary Smith), 99, 102, 168, 209, 225-6, 245, 253, 260.
Cranch, Richard, 9, 16, 168, 181, 202.
Cranch, William, 261.
Crown Point, 134.
Cushing, Prentice, 220.
Cushing, Thomas, 45, 49.
Custis, Major George Washington Parke, 306.
Customs Commissioners in Boston, 15.

Dalrymple, Colonel, 28.
Dana, Richard, 190, 195.
Dana, Mrs. Richard, 192-3.
Davie, William R., 298, 300, 304.
Dawes, William, 22, 67.
Deane, Silas, 109, 144, 168, 182, 186.
Debate on Independence, 127, 128.
Declaration of Independence, 125, 127, 129, 134, 145.
"Defense of the American Constitutions," John Adams', 261.
Democrat-Republicans, 274.
Devonshire, Duchess of, 247.
Dexter, Samuel, 301.
Diary of John Adams, 14.
Dickinson, John, 87, 88, 95, 109.
Dorchester Hill, 21, 115, 116, 117, 148.
Draper the printer; his paper, the Boston *News-Letter*, 13, 65.
Dysentery Epidemic, 100.

East India Company, 36.
Effingham, Countess of, 244.
Ellsworth, Chief Justice; officiates at John Adams' Inauguration, 285-7, 298, 300, 304, 308.
England, Mrs. Adams' journey to, 209; arrival in, 215-17.

Essay on Canon and Feudal Law, John Adams', 12.
d'Estaing, 177, 188, 194.
Esther, the maid, 209-10, 229, 269.

Faneuil Hall, Boston, 21, 32, 43, 104.
la Fayette, Marquis de, 188, 239, 241, 243; Marquise de, 235; family of, 235, 279.
Federalists, 266, 276-7, 277, 300-1, 302, 304, 317.
Fisheries of Northeast, 190, 199.
Foreign Alliances, John Adams on, 110.
Foreign Treaties Resolution, 126, 127.
Fort Hill, Boston, 15, 118.
Forts, Hudson River, 153.
Fort Washington, Capture of by British, 145.
Foundling Hospital, London, 224.
Fourth of July, 129; 1826, Deaths of Jefferson and Adams on, 327.
Fox, Charles James, 41.
France, 109; John Adams Commissioner to, 168; Treaty with, 181; Mrs. Adams' arrival in, 229.
Francis Hotel, Philadelphia, 286.
Franklin, Benjamin, 59, 78, 127, 128, 134, 139, 144, 168, 170, 177, 179, 180, 182, 183, 185, 186, 189, 194, 196, 198, 199, 203-5, 225, 230, 239.
French and Indian Wars, 22.
French Fleet in Boston waters, Mrs. Adams visits, 178, 188.
French Revolution, 274, 277, 320.

Gage, General Thomas, 41, 42, 54, 55, 62, 64, 65, 67, 75, 77, 79, 80, 84, 94, 96, 98, 130.
Gates, General Horatio, 122, 124, 157, 160, 163, 165, 195.
Genet, Edmond C., 274, 277-8, 280, 285.
George III, 5, 11, 15, 18, 22, 41, 42, 62, 113, 130; Prayers for in Braintree, 141-44, 166, 184; receives John Adams, 243; Mrs. Adams is presented to, 245, 259, 294.
Georgetown, 304.
Gérard, French Ambassador, 189.
Germain, Lord George, 158.
Gerry, Elbridge, 112, 134, 135, 137, 164, 183, 200, 296.
Glasgow, British ship, 85.
Governor's Island, Retreat from, 140.
Grape Island, 73.
de Grasse, Comte, 195.
Graves, Admiral, 94.
Great Hill, 72.
Green Dragon Tavern, Boston, 22.
Greene, General Nathanael, 85.
Greene, Gardner, 105.
Greenleaf, Sheriff, 131.
Grenville, George, 12.
Gridley, Jeremiah, 8, 12, 15.

"Hail Columbia," 296.
Hallowell, Parson and Mrs., 220, 223.
Hamilton, Alexander, 148, 149, 164, 188, 265-7, 277, 280, 283, 295, 296, 297, 300, 301, 302-3, 309; Mrs. (see Betsey Schuyler).
Hamilton, Nancy, 247, 269.
Hancock homestead, 8.
Hancock, John, 19, 52, 62, 65, 66, 74, 89, 103, 130, 146, 168, 178.
Hancock, Mrs. John (see also Dorothy Quincy), 103.
Harvard College, 7.
Heath, General William, 69, 99, 178.
Helvetius, Madame, 230-1.
Henchman's Bookstore, Daniel, 75.
Henry, Patrick, 57, 109, 110, 134.
Hessians, 144, 147, 149.
Hill's Tavern, 17.
Holland, 186; John Adams negotiates loans from, 194, 207; Mrs. Adams' visit to, 256-7.
Hollis Street Church, Boston, 21, 105.
Hôtel des Etats Unis d'Amerique at The Hague, 221.
Howe, General Sir William, 77, 81, 105, 106, 116-18, 130, 135, 145-6, 151, 153, 156, 158, 160, 163, 164, 166, 188.
Howe, Lord, 139; Committee to meet, 139, 154.
Hutchinson, Lieut.-Governor Thomas, 15, 18, 28, 37, 42, 195.

Inches, Henderson, 24.
Independence Proclamation in Boston, 130, 131.
Independents, 87.
Indians, 144, 157; French Caghnawaga, 111-112.
Inoculation, 100, 133, 135.

"Jacobins," The, 296, 307.
Jay, John, 190, 196, 198, 203-5; presses choice of John Adams as Minister to Britain, 206, 269, 272, 280, 281, 308.
Jay, Mrs. John, 200.
Jefferson, Thomas, 87, 109, 127, 128, 131, 225, 228, 231-2, 237, 239, 240, 241, 253, 254, 255, 256, 261; Mrs. Adams plots

with, 263-4, 269, 274, 277, 280, 281; as Vice-President, 282, 283, 289, 295, 299, 302, 304, 307, 309, 310; dismisses John Quincy Adams, 312, 318; correspondence with Mrs. Adams, 318, 320, 321; at Monticello, 322; Death of, 327.
Jefferson, "Polly" (Mrs. Eppes), 261, 318.
Johnson, Joshua, 293.
Johnson, Louisa Catherine, marries John Quincy Adams, 293.
Johnson, Thomas, 90, 293.

Keppel, Admiral, 185.
King Street, Boston, 24, 132.
Knowlton, Major Thomas, 104.
Knox, Henry, 22, 26, 75, 80, 110, 148, 280, 297.
Knox, Mrs., 76, 270.

Laurens, Henry, 196, 198.
Learned, Colonel Ebenezer, 117.
Lee, Charles, 92, 94, 95, 113, 135, 188.
Lee, Richard Henry, 109, 123, 126, 127, 144, 168, 182, 186.
Leonard, Judge Daniel, 66.
Levees at President Adams' House, Philadelphia, 291-2.
Lewis, Mrs. (Eleanor Parke Custis), 307.
Lexington, Battle of, 66, 69, 71, 74.
Lincoln, General Benjamin, 188.
Livingston, R. R., 127.
London, Mrs. Adams' impressions of, 218, 219, 247.
Long Island, Mass., 96.
Long Island, Battles of, 136, 142; Retreat from, 140.
Long Wharf, 98.
Louis XVI, 109, 144, 145, 187.
Lovell, James, 96, 161, 162, 168, 177, 183, 200.
de la Luzerne, Chevalier, 187.
Lyde, Captain, 211, 214, 225.
de Lynden, Baron, 243.

Madison, James, 200, 317.
Magdalen Hospital, London, 224.
Mansfield, Lord, 70.
Marchant, Henry, 164.
Maria Theresa Charlotte, Princess, 185.
Marie Antoinette, Queen, 238, 279.
Maritime Code, John Adams', 109.
Marlborough, Duke of, 263.
Marshall, John, 296, 301; appointed Chief Justice by John Adams, 308.
Masonic Meetings in Boston, 22.
"Massachusettensis" Letters, 66.
Massachusetts, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 33, 42, 52, 58, 59, 68, 71, 74, 89, 92, 110; delegates in Congress, 112, 113, 133, 135, 147, 151, 152; Constitution, 188, 201.
Massachusetts Congress, 65, 91, 93, 100, 111, 118, 134.
McHenry, James, 280, 295, 301.
Mercer, James, 200.
Messiah, Handel's, 247.
Mifflin, Colonel, 80, 111, 122.
Milk Street, Boston, 38.
Milton, Mass., 37, 114.
Minute-men, 22, 69.
Mississippi River, 190, 199.
Monroe, James, 326.
Morris, Gouverneur, 295.
Morris, Robert, 158.
Mount Vernon, Washington retires to, 288, 302, 305.
Mount Wollaston, 5, 17.
Murray, Vans, 221, 298.
Mystic, River, 80, 82.

Negro Slaves in Boston, 64.
New England Fishermen at crossing of Delaware, 147-8.
New York, 36, 52, 63, 86, 89, 113, 133, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140; Regiment, 141, 142, 145, 146, 157.
Non-intercourse Resolutions, 63.
Nook's Hill, 116.
North, Lord, 41, 91, 195, 198.
Norton family, 3, 10.
"Novanglus" Letters, 65, 66.

Old South Church, Boston, 21, 37, 74, 105.
Onslow, Earl of, 245.
Orange, Prince of, 257.
Otis, James, 11, 15, 35, 131.
Otis, Mrs., 306.

Paine, Robert Treat, 45, 49, 52.
Paine, Thomas, 123, 285.
Paris, Mrs. Adams' Arrival in, 230.
Parliament, British, 11, 16, 42, 61, 71, 139, 185, 195, 247.
Parsons, Theophilus, 268.
Patterson, Judge, 308.
Paulus Hook, Loss of, 142.
Pearl Street, Boston, 38.
Penn's Hill, 21, 68, 82, 114, 323.
Percy, Lord, 81, 104, 145.
Philadelphia, 36, 44, 49, 50; Sons of Liberty, 52, 54, 59, 63, 64, 66, 69, 78, 86,

91, 95, 107, 112, 113, 125, 135, 154; Congress leaves, 164.
Pickering, Timothy, 280, 295, 299, 300, 301.
Piel, Lieutenant, 149.
Pinckney, C. C., 296.
Pitt, William, the elder, 22, 41, 62.
Pitt, William, the younger, 252.
Pitts, Lendall, 39.
Platt, Mrs., 247.
Plymouth, Mass., 35, 120.
Poughkeepsie, 151.
Powell, Mrs., 270.
Prescott, Colonel William, 80, 83.
President's House, The, Washington, 304-5.
Preston, Captain Thomas, 25, 28, 32.
Prince of Wales, The, 252, 259.
Princess Amelia, Death of, 252, 259.
Princesses, British Royal, 245, 246, 250.
Province House, Boston, 105, 116.
Provincial Army, 21, 26, 69, 73.
Putnam, Colonel Israel, 47, 117, 145, 150.
Putnam, James, 8.

Quakers, 59, 86.
Queen Charlotte, 243, 246, 259.
Queen Street, Boston, 35, 42, 75, 118.
de Quincy, 262.
Quincy, Dorothy (see also Mrs. John Hancock), 17, 74.
Quincy, Edmund, 74, 262.
Quincy family, 3, 10, 18, 57.
Quincy, Grandmother, 4, 17, 40.
Quincy, Colonel John, 4, 18, 57, 262, 274.
Quincy, Josiah, Jr., 28, 30, 37, 57, 130, 208.
Quincy, Josiah, Jr., the second, 312-13.
Quincy, Mrs. Josiah, 57.
Quincy, Mass. (see also Braintree), 275, 324.
Quincy Meeting-house, the Adames at, 311.
Quincy, Nancy, 228, 241.
Quincy, Norton, 168, 170.
Quincy, Samuel, 30, 98, 283.
Quincy, Mrs. Samuel, 57.

Rall, Colonel, 148-9.
Revere, Paul, 22, 59, 66, 67.
"Rights of Man," Thomas Paine's, 273.
Roberdeau, General Daniel, 164.
Rochambeau, Jean Baptiste, 195.
"Rollins' Ancient History," 39.
Romanzoff, Count, 325.
Rotch, Captain, 37.
"Rotten Boroughs" in England, 41.
Royal Arms, Burning of, 132.
Rush, Dr. Benjamin, 318, 319, 321.
Rutledge, Thomas, 57, 126, 134, 139.

St. Asaph, Bishop of, officiates at "Abby's" wedding, 251.
St. Clair, General Arthur, 157.
St. Leger, General Barry, 153, 156, 157.
Salem, Mass., 17, 40, 43, 48.
Salisbury, Countess of, 246.
Saratoga, Victory at, 165.
Saville, Lord, 41.
"School for Scandal, The," 271.
Schuyler, Betsey (Mrs. Alexander Hamilton), 270.
Schuyler, General Philip John, 157, 165.
Sea-bathing, Mrs. Adams tries, 262.
Sensible, Frigate, 187, 194.
Servants, French, 134, 234, 238, 306.
Sewall homestead, 8.
Sewall, Jonathan, 20, 283.
Shaw, Elizabeth (see also Elizabeth Smith), 168, 226, 257, 261, 315.
Shaw, Rev. William, 168, 204, 261.
Sherman, Roger, 127.
Siddons, Mrs., 253.
Smallpox, 17, 117, 133, 134.
Smith, Abby (see also Abigail Adams the younger), 255, 259, 270, 272, 280, 311, 315; Death of, 322.
Smith, Caroline Adams, 315-16.
Smith, Mrs. Elizabeth Quincy, 4, 10, 40, 102.
Smith, Elizabeth (see also Elizabeth Shaw), 5, 9, 40, 102, 120, 121, 134.
Smith family, 3, 73.
Smith family, Colonel, 265, 269, 278, 315.
Smith, Johnny, 269, 271.
Smith, Mary (see also Mary Cranch), 5, 9, 10, 40.
Smith, Thomas, 5, 10, 40, 61, 159.
Smith, Parson William, 4, 9, 10, 16, 17, 40, 83, 102, 134, 168, 205.
Smith, Colonel William Stephens, 166, 242, 243; marries Abby Adams, 249, 250, 259, 260, 272, 280, 294, 322.
Sons of Liberty, 19, 31, 37, 62.
Spectator, The, 6.
Stamp Act, 11, 15, 18.
Stark, General John, 157.
State House, Boston (see also Town House), 130, 132.
Sterling, Lord, 113.
von Steuben, Baron Frederick William, 188.
Stony Brook, New Jersey, Victory at, 150.
Storer, Charles, 218, 222, 228, 236.
Storer, Mrs., 228, 238.
Sullivan, Colonel John, 148.

Talbot, Countess of, 246.
Talleyrand, 297, 299, 300.
Tappan's Bay, 153.
Taxes, 18, 110.
Tea Tax, 35.
Tea that Gerry carried, The, 134, 135, 137.
Thaxter, Mr., 53, 57, 60, 72, 190.
Thomas, General John, 97, 99, 124.
"Thoughts on Government," John Adams', 123.
Ticonderoga, 135; Battle of, 157.
Tories, 20, 41, 55, 63, 86, 104; in British Parliament, 144, 152.
Tory ladies in Boston, 152.
Town House, Boston (see also State House), 15, 21, 24, 28, 32.
Town House, Braintree, 13.
Townshend, Charles, 18.
Trenton, 147, 148, 149.
Trumbull, John, 253.
Tucker, Captain Samuel, 170, 171, 172.
Tufts, Dr. Cotton, 17, 73, 168, 240.
Tufts, Mrs., 73, 259; family, 190.
Tyler, Royall, 204.
Tyng family, 3, 10.

United States of America, 128, 129, 131, 137.

de Vergennes, Comte, 144, 182, 189, 194, 196, 198, 199, 200, 263.
Vinton, Sheriff, 55, 56.

War and Ordnance, Board of, Mr. Adams as head of, 127.
War of 1812, 322; End of, 324.
Ward, General Artemas, 69, 117.
Warren family, 35, 48.
Warren, James, 35, 65, 91, 93, 94, 133, 162, 184, 230.
Warren, Dr. Joseph, 22, 35, 37, 47, 54, 65, 69, 80, 84, 88; Masonic Funeral of, 120, 130.
Warren, Mercy (Otis), 35, 46, 50, 120, 121, 162, 180.
Washington, City of, 299, 304, 307; Congress meets for first time in, 307; Destroyed in War of 1812, 324.
Washington, George, 57, 86, 89, 90, 91; takes command of American Army, 91, 97, 104, 110, 111, 112, 115-16, 117-18; in Boston, 118; voted a medal of honor, 118, 122, 134, 135, 148; crosses the Delaware, 136, 140, 145, 147, 149, 150; marches through Philadelphia, 158, 163, 164, 165; at Valley Forge, 188, 195; at Yorktown, 195, 264; elected President, 265, 272; chooses John Q. Adams as Minister to Holland, 275; criticism of, 277, 278, 280; at John Adams' Inaugural, 284-7; Birthday celebrations, 288, 289, 293; becomes Commander-in-Chief again, 297; Death of, 302.
Washington family, 272.
Washington, Martha, 111, 269, 278, 279, 305, 306.
Watertown, 91, 107, 111, 140.
Wayne, Anthony, 164.
Weymouth, Mass., 3, 9, 16, 17, 40, 72, 102, 114.
Whigs, 61, 62, 151.
White Plains, 145.
Whitney, Rev., 311, 313.
Willing sisters, 291.
Wives of soldiers at Battlefields, 150.
Wolcott, Oliver, 280, 295, 301, 303.
Worcester, Mass., Mr. Adams teaches school at, 8.
Wright, The Eccentric Mrs., 222-3.
Writings of John Adams, 274.
Wythe, George, 122-3.

X.Y.Z. Letters, 296.

Yellow Fever in Philadelphia, 149.
Yorktown, Victory at, 195.